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ABSTRACT

Questionnaires were sent to 244 English department chairmen in the public high schools of Michigan's six largest cities in this study, which (1) describes the content of the various book selection and book complaint policies used by the departments; (2) compares the effects these policies have on the inhibition or resolution of censorship; and (3) provides a complete sample book selection and complaint policy modeled on the best characteristics of the policies examined for this study. Findings support three hypotheses: that most English departments do not have a written policy explaining the procedures and criteria used to select books; that most English departments do not have a written policy explaining the procedures used to acknowledge and resolve objections to books selected or recommended; and that English departments with no written policy are less successful in inhibiting or resolving censorship than English departments with one or both of the written policies recommended by the American Library Association and the National Council of Teachers of English. Appended are the questionnaire, policy statements, and model book selection and complaint policy. (HOD)

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BOOK SELECTION POLICIES, BOOK COMPLAINT POLICIES AND CENSORSHIP IN SELECTED MICHIGAN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

by
Rollin George Douma

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

> Censorship in schools is a widespread problem. Teachers of English, librarians, and school administrators can best serve students, literature, and the profession today if they prepare now to face pressures sensibly, demonstrating on the one hand a willingness to consider the merits of any complaint and on the other the courage to defend their literature program with intelligence and vigor. The [National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)] therefore recommends that every school undertake the following two-step program to protect the students' right to read:
>
> > the establishment of a committee of teachers to consider book selection procedures and to screen complaints; and
> >
> > a vigorous campaign to establish a community atmosphere in which local citizens may be enlisted to support the freedom to read.[1]

The validity of the NCTE's 1972 assertion that "censorship in schools is a widespread problem" seems confirmed by studies conducted during the past decade. These studies, however, have little to offer persons looking for effective means of combatting censorship. Although at least ten investigators have sought to determine the frequency and nature of censorship incidents, and at least two have described the book selection practices of teachers,

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[1]Kenneth L. Donelson, ed., The Students' Right to Read (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1972), p. 13.

no study has yet tested empirically the effectiveness of the NCTE's "two-step program to protect the students' right to read": (1) establishing procedures both for selecting books and screening complaints and (2) establishing a community climate supportive of the freedom to read. In this study, I will provide an empirical test of the first step: more specifically, I will determine the effect various book selection and complaint screening procedures have on the inhibition or resolution of censorship.

Definition of Terms

Because the following key terms are variously defined, I include a brief glossary at this point.

1. Censorship is an essentially negative act involving the use of nonprofessional criteria and procedures to suppress, proscribe, or repress books.
2. Selection is an essentially positive act involving the use of professional criteria and procedures to adopt books.
3. An objection is a complaint against a book's use or content, usually submitted with the intention of having the book removed from use.
4. A censorship incident is that event occasioned by the submission of an objection.
5. A book selection policy is a written statement explaining the purpose, method, and criteria

used to select books.

6. A book complaint policy is a written statement explaining the procedures used to acknowledge and resolve objections to books selected.

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of my study are: (1) to describe the content of the various book selection and book complaint policies used by a selected sample of public high school English departments; (2) to compare the effects these policies have on the inhibition or resolution of censorship; and (3) to provide a complete, sample book selection and complaint policy modeled on the best characteristics of the policies examined during the writing of this study.

Type of Study

Since no investigation has been conducted in this area, my study is both exploratory and descriptive. On the one hand, I intend to discover the validity of some primary hypotheses and to provide information helpful in formulating hypotheses for more definitive investigations. On the other hand, I intend to describe the effect of written policies on the inhibition or resolution of censorship in a particular population at a particular time and to offer a "model" selection and complaint policy for inspection.

Limitations of the Study

I limited my method of collecting data to a

questionnaire survey. Additionally, I limited the population and geographical scope of the survey to 224 English department chairmen teaching in the public high schools of Michigan's six largest cities and their metropolitan areas. Questionnaires were returned by 127 chairmen. My conclusions, therefore, are based on the questionnaire responses of these 127 chairmen.

Method of the Study

The questionnaire was mailed on February 21, 1970. It asked each of the 224 chairmen in the sample to send copies of (or to explain, if no written copies existed) his department's book selection and book complaint policies, as well as to describe the censorship incidents encountered by his department during the preceding two and one-half school years. I later sent a second letter of request, attempting to retrieve copies of the written book selection policies from seventeen chairmen who indicated that their schools had such policies but who did not send them with the questionnaire.

The selection and complaint policies sent or explained in the 127 returned questionnaires were first examined for their content and then studied in an effort to judge their effectiveness in inhibiting or resolving censorship. Additionally, the policies served to provide much of the material used in composing the "model" book selection and complaint policy presented on pages 120-142.

Hypotheses

Using the sample and procedures already described, I attempted to validate three hypotheses, each derived from the findings and suggestions contained in the literature reviewed in Chapter I.

1. Most English departments do not have a written policy explaining the procedures and criteria used to select books.
2. Most English departments do not have a written policy explaining the procedures used to acknowledge and resolve objections to books selected or recommended.
3. English departments with no written policy are less successful in inhibiting or resolving censorship than English departments with one or both of the written policies.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I contains a review of the literature pertinent to this study.

Chapter II contains an explanation of the design and procedures of the study.

Chapter III contains a report of the findings.

Chapter IV contains the conclusions reached through the testing of the hypotheses, recommendations based on the implications of the conclusions, and the "model" book selection and book complaint policy.

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section contains a summary of the major empirical studies on censorship and book selection in public schools and libraries; the second, a summary of the major "right to read" statements; the third, a review of the literature on book selection policies; the fourth, a review of the literature on book complaint policies.

Research Studies

Three studies of book selection practices and censorship in school and public libraries have been conducted. In the first of these (1958), Marjorie Fiske concluded that (1) librarians themselves are frequent censors,[1] and (2) librarians think the use of a written book selection policy is ineffectual in preventing censorship incidents.[2]

As evidence in support of her first conclusion, Fiske cited statistical data gathered from interviews with

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[1]Marjorie Fiske, Book Selection and Censorship (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), p. 132.

[2]Ibid., p. 74

156 California high school and public librarians and forty-eight high school administrators. First, she found that almost half (forty-two per cent) of the objections to books in high school libraries originated from the librarians themselves; second, that twenty-nine per cent of the school librarians admitted avoiding controversial material "habitually" and another twenty-nine per cent "sometimes"; and third, that school librarians, whatever the nature of the objection, either removed or restricted somehow eighty-seven per cent of the books objected to by high school administrators and teachers and forty-seven per cent of the books objected to by people outside the school.[1]

Regarding book selection practices, Fiske discovered that "the most frequently discussed administrative aid for problems of controversiality is the written book selection policy."[2] However, she also found that (1) "the methods of drawing up book selection policies vary"; (2) "there is little uniformity in what happens to policies after they have been completed"; (3) "although the majority of the institutions which have adopted them did so as a protective measure, two-thirds of [the] librarians have doubts about their usefulness"; and (4) "there is . . . disagreement about the degree of specificity which any kind of written policy should have."[3] Thus, Fiske was able to find little

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[1] Ibid., pp. 123-132, passim.

[2] Ibid., p. 74.

[3] Ibid., pp. 75-76.

evidence which suggested that the use of a written book selection policy was effective in inhibiting censorship. Yet, without a more thorough investigation than Fiske's of the comparative effect selection policies of different quality and content have on the incidence of censorship, this conclusion seems tentative, at best.

A second study which concluded that librarians are frequent censors was conducted by John Farley (1965).[1] From the data collected in his interviews with fifty-four head librarians in the same number of schools serving grades ten through twelve in Nassau County, New York, Farley was able to distinguish two general kinds of censorship: (1) involuntary censorship--"result[ing] from pressures imposed upon the librarians"--and (2) voluntary censorship--"performed by the librarian on his own initiative and because of his own convictions."[2] Of the two kinds, Farley discovered that "voluntary censorship . . . was more prevalent than was involuntary censorship."[3] His data showed that "a majority of the Nassau County high school librarians had had experience with censorship attempts by members of the community, . . . [but] these attempts . . . had usually been ineffectual."[4] Contrarily,

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[1] John J. Farley, "Book Censorship in the Senior High School Libraries of Nassau County, New York," Dissertation Abstracts, XXV (1965), 5949.

[2] Ibid., p. 5948.

[3] Ibid., p. 5949.

[4] Ibid., p. 5948.

however, he found that "all of the librarians performed some book censorship on occasion," presumably effectual; about thirty per cent of the librarians queried rarely censored, but about ten per cent usually or habitually censored and sixty per cent were somewhere in between--neither did they rarely censor nor did they usually censor.[1]

Although unable to find agreement among the librarians concerning exactly what books should be censored, Farley did find that all the librarians censored "the novel seen as treating of sex too explicitly," "some types of sex education books," and "books thought of as attacks upon religion or upon the beliefs of one sect, or of books considered as too sectarian." Moreover, a majority of the librarians censored "some art books containing pictures of nudes," "some books in the general category of politics," and "books considered as extreme or one-sided treatments of communism or race."[2]

Farley also found that the most frequently cited reasons for the librarians' voluntary censorship were "the youth and immaturity of high school students" and the "belief that some kinds of reading can have ill effects upon character and conduct."[3]

A third study, complementing the findings of both

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 5949.

Farley and Fiske regarding voluntary censorship, is Charles Busha's 1970 questionnaire survey of a random sample of 624 Midwestern public librarians.[1] His purpose was to identify the "relationship between the librarians' intellectual freedom and censorship attitudes."[2]

Busha concluded from his findings that all the librarians' intellectual freedom scores indicated a very high degree of agreement with statements favoring intellectual freedom, but "a marked disparity existed between the attitudes of some librarians toward intellectual freedom as a concept and their attitudes toward censorship as an activity." His data showed that, in attitude, fourteen per cent of the librarians were predominately sympathetic toward censorship and sixty-four per cent were neither highly favorable nor unfavorable toward censorship.[3]

Busha's findings, then, complement those of Farley and Fiske. While the latter present evidence indicating that a majority of librarians are censorial in practice, Busha presents evidence indicating that a considerable proportion of librarians are censorial in attitude.

In addition to these studies concerned with censorship in public and school libraries, at least nine other

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[1]Charles H. Busha, "The Attitudes of Midwestern Public Librarians toward Intellectual Freedom and Censorship," Dissertation Abstracts, XXXII (1971), 2718.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

recent studies have focused on censorship and book selection in the public school English classrooms. Three of these studies are superficial, but nevertheless merit a brief summary. In one, the Utah Council of Teachers of English found that in 1962 thirty per cent of the seventy junior and senior high school English department chairmen in Utah responding to a questionnaire survey said that their schools had received objections to books, most frequently from parents but also from administrators and community organizations.[1] Another questionnaire survey--conducted by Retha Foster in 1966--revealed that (1) forty-one per cent of the eighty-seven Arizona English teachers queried taught in schools which had experienced a censorship incident during 1964-1966, (2) twenty-five per cent taught in schools which had a written complaint policy, and (3) twenty-four per cent of the books objected to were removed from use.[2] And in 1967, H. T. Spetnagel found from his questionnaire survey that thirty-six per cent of the ninety-eight Colorado English teachers in his sample taught in schools which had

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[1]Utah Council of Teachers of English, "Report of the Censorship Roundup Committee," unpublished document in the files of the National Council of Teachers of English, cited in Nyla Herber Ahrens, "Censorship and the Teacher of English: A Questionnaire Survey of Selected Sample of Secondary School Teachers of English" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1965), p. 12.

[2]Retha Foster, "Censorship and Arizona High Schools," Arizona English Bulletin, (May, 1966), cited in Kenneth L. Donelson, "Censorship and Arizona Schools: 1966-1968," Arizona English Bulletin, II, No. 2 (1969), 30.

experienced a censorship incident.[1]

Five other studies, however, are not so superficial. The common findings in these studies are presented in Table 1, following on pages fourteen and fifteen.

Several generalizations can be drawn from Table 1, but these generalizations must be tempered by the fact that there exist among the studies variables which might well influence interpretation. First, the studies collectively span the years 1960-1968, but three of the five studies span only two years within this period. Thus, the social and pedagogical factors which may have influenced, say, the reported number of incidents of censorship in Donelson's survey covering the years 1966-1968 might not be the same factors which influenced the reported number of incidents in Burress' survey covering the years 1960-1968. Second, the scope of the samples varies greatly, from small and localized (e.g., thirty-six English department chairmen in one county of one state) to large and geographically widespread (e.g., 616 high school English teachers in forty-nine states). Thus, factors peculiar to one group or geographical area might skew individual surveys. And, too, it must be recognized that the response of a person in a small sample carries more statistical weight than the

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[1] H. T. Spetnagel, "Censorship in Colorado: A Survey Report," Statement: The Journal of the Colorado Language Arts Society, (October, 1968), cited in Kenneth L. Donelson, "Censorship and Arizona Schools: 1966-1968," Arizona English Bulletin, II, No. 2 (1969), 30.

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH STUDIES

[a]Lee A. Burress, Jr., "How Censorship Affects the School," Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English, Special Bulletin No. 8, (October, 1963), pp. 1-23, passim.

[b]Nyla Herber Ahrens, "Censorship and the Teacher of English: A Questionnaire Survey of Selected Sample of Secondary School Teachers of English" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1965), pp. 1-130, passim.

[c]Rozanne Ruth Knudson, "Censorship in the English Programs of California's Junior Colleges" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1967), pp. 1-200, passim.

[d]Ronald T. LaConte, "The Relationship between Book Selection Practices and Certain Controversial Elements of Literature in Bergen County, New Jersey Public Senior High School English Departments" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Rutgers--The State University, 1967), pp. 1-158, passim.

[e]Kenneth L. Donelson, "Censorship and Arizona Schools: 1966-1968," Arizona English Bulletin, II, No. 2 (1969), 28-44, passim.

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH STUDIES

Item	Burress[a] 1963	Ahrens[b] 1965	Knudson[c] 1966	LaConte[d] 1967	Donelson[e] 1968
Sample description	606 Wisconsin English teachers and administrators	616 NCTE members in 49 states	145 Calif. junior college English teachers	36 English department chairmen in Bergen County, New Jersey	168 Arizona English teachers
Time covered by survey	2½ years	2 years	4 years	Tenure of chairmen	2 years
Percentage reporting censorship incidents	22	13	13	11	20
Percentage reporting book removals	No mention	4	4	No mention	12
Percentage reporting selection policies	No mention	No mention	No mention	22	No mention

TABLE 1--Continued

Item	Burress 1963	Ahrens 1965	Knudson 1966	LaConte 1967	Donelson 1968
Percentage reporting complaint policies	17	21	No mention	14	30
Objectors, listed in descending order of frequency	Parents, teachers, clergymen, administrators, librarians, students, PTA members, citizens, organizations	Parents, students, clergymen, administrators, English department chairmen, teachers	Parents, students, administrators, English department chairmen, clergymen, librarians	No mention	Parents, teachers, religious groups, administrators, students, librarians
Objections, listed in descending order of frequency	Language, sex, immorality, politics, religion	Language, specific passages, vulgarity, race, politics	Language, immorality, specific passages, religion, race, politics	Literary value, language, sex, race, religion, politics	Language, sex, religion, politics, race

response of a person in a large sample. For instance, Donelson reported that thirty-three teachers in his sample of 168 experienced a censorship incident[1] while Ahrens reported that more than twice as many, seventy-eight, teachers in her sample of 616 experienced a censorship incident;[2] yet, because of the difference in the size of their samples, Donelson ends up (as Table 1 shows) with the conclusion that twenty per cent of his sample experienced a censorship incident while Ahrens ends up with thirteen per cent.

Because of these variables, then, generalizations must be considered suspect. The collective data in Table 1 do suggest, however, that (1) between eleven per cent and twenty-two per cent of English teachers have had some experience with censorship; (2) between four per cent and twelve per cent of the books involved in censorship incidents are actually removed; (3) between fourteen per cent and thirty per cent of the schools have a written book complaint policy; (4) the most frequent objectors, in descending order, are parents, students and teachers, clergymen/religious groups, administrators, librarians, and organizations; and (5) the most frequent reasons, in descending order, cited for objecting to a book are

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[1] Ibid., p. 30.

[2] Ahrens, "Censorship and the Teacher of English: A Questionnaire Survey of Selected Sample of Secondary School Teachers of English," p. 26.

language, sex/vulgarity/immorality/specific passages, religion, race, and politics.

Beyond the common findings above, the five studies present some interesting and unique findings. A summarization of these follows.

The data received by Ronald LaConte in his questionnaire and interview survey of thirty-six high school English department chairmen in one county of New Jersey indicated that "there were no important differences in the methods of selection between controversial and noncontroversial books [and that] both were likely to be chosen by either a selection committee or a classroom teacher working with the Department Chairman."[1]

However, to determine more particularly the relationship between book selection practices and certain controversial elements (language, sex, race, religion, and politics) in literature, LaConte presented the chairmen with a questionnaire listing fifty book titles--twenty-five noncontroversial and twenty-five controversial (books which had been the objects of reported censorship incidents elsewhere)--and asked them to judge each as suitable for all twelfth graders, suitable for none, or suitable only for special groups. In addition, for each book marked "suitable for none," the respondents were asked to indicate

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[1]LaConte, "The Relationship between Book Selection Practices and Certain Controversial Elements of Literature in Bergen County, New Jersey Public Senior High School English Departments," pp. 94-95.

their reason for judgment (see Table 1). Tables 2 and 3, following on pages nineteen and twenty, list the chairmen's judgments of the controversial and noncontroversial books.

From the chairmen's judgments of the suitability of controversial and noncontroversial books and from the additional findings that "twenty-eight respondents [seventy-eight per cent] reported voluntarily rejecting a book . . . because it was controversial [and] nineteen respondents [fifty-three per cent] reported refusing to allow a teacher to use a book because it was controversial," LaConte concluded that "there is a strong tendency among these Department Chairmen to reject controversial books for use in the classroom or to restrict their use to above-average students."[1] However, LaConte also found that "Department Chairmen who had been involved in prior censorship incidents tended to restrict or reject fewer books than those who had not been involved in incidents . . . [and] Department Chairmen from schools having a written policy for handling objections to books restricted or rejected fewer controversial books than those from schools without a policy."[2] Apparently, then, experience with and preparation for handling objections lessen the individual chairman's unwillingness to use controversial books.

Using a survey technique similar to LaConte's,

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[1] Ibid., p. 155.

[2] Ibid., p. 153.

TABLE 2

JUDGMENT OF CONTROVERSIAL BOOKS
(ADAPTED FROM LaCONTE'S TABLE)[a]

Title	Suitable for All	Suitable for None	Suitable for Above-Average Only
Andersonville	9	10	11
Androcles and the Lion	22	0	12
Animal Farm	33	0	3
The Bible	26	5	5
The Big Sky	14	2	6
Brave New World	13	8	15
The Canterbury Tales	17	0	19
The Catcher in the Rye	11	20	5
Elmer Gantry	9	14	11
A Farewell to Arms	21	3	12
Gone with the Wind	15	18	2
The Grapes of Wrath	23	5	8
Huckleberry Finn	32	2	2
The Jungle	19	6	10
Look Homeward Angel	15	2	19
The Merchant of Venice	31	1	3
Native Son	12	9	6
1984	22	9	5
1919	8	3	16
Of Human Bondage	25	3	8
Of Mice and Men	26	1	9
The Ox-Bow Incident	31	1	2
To Kill a Mockingbird	26	6	4
The Ugly American	19	12	2
The Wall	21	4	4

[a]Ibid., p. 98.

TABLE 3

JUDGMENT OF NONCONTROVERSIAL BOOKS
(ADAPTED FROM LaCONTE'S TABLE)[a]

Title	Suitable for All	Suitable for None	Suitable for Above-Average Only
The Ambassadors	10	1	22
Cyrano de Bergerac	31	1	3
David Copperfield	26	3	5
The Egoist	8	4	14
Emerson Essays	20	0	16
Ethan Frome	34	1	3
Everyman	23	2	10
The Forsyte Saga	14	2	17
Green Mansions	25	3	5
Hamlet	24	0	12
The House of the Seven Gables	29	3	4
Lord Jim	13	1	21
Macbeth	33	0	3
Moby Dick	15	1	20
My Antonia	33	0	3
Oedipus	18	1	17
The Old Man and the Sea	32	3	1
Frost Poems	33	2	1
Pride and Prejudice	21	2	13
The Return of the Native	20	2	14
The Rise of Silas Lapham	16	7	10
Robinson Crusoe	18	9	8
Poe Tales	31	3	2
Tono Bungay	14	4	1
Wuthering Heights	19	6	11

[a]Ibid., p. 103.

Rozanne Knudson (1967) sent 160 California junior college English teachers a list of thirty books--half controversial (books which had been objects of reported censorship incidents elsewhere), half not--to determine the prevalence of voluntary censorship among these teachers.[1]

Regarding involuntary censorship, Knudson found that approximately thirteen per cent of the 145 respondents noted certain works on the list that their supervisors had told them not to require or recommend; fifty-five per cent noted works they believed they would not be allowed to require or recommend or that they knew too little about to judge; and forty-eight per cent believed that they had unrestricted freedom in choosing works for their courses.[2]

Regarding voluntary censorship, Knudson "discovered that many teachers (79.3 per cent) in [her sample] exercise self-censorship (either because of anticipation of 'trouble' or their own censorialness or both)."[3] Consequently, as Knudson concludes, voluntary censorship apparently is prevalent among this sample of English teachers.

Lee A. Burress, Jr. (1963) also found voluntary censorship prevalent in Wisconsin public high schools.[4]

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[1]Knudson, "Censorship in English Programs of California's Junior Colleges," p. 190.

[2]Ibid., pp. 192-193.

[3]Ibid., p. 196.

[4]Burress, "How Censorship Affects the School," p. 2.

Although he offers no statistical evidence to support his conclusion, Burress states that the 606 questionnaires returned by teachers and administrators indicated that no relationship exists between censorship and the size of a school or between censorship and the location of a school in an urban, suburban, or rural area.[1] Yet, like LaConte and Knudson, he found that "there is much self-censorship [although] how much . . . is difficult to measure."[2]

The information from the questionnaires also allowed him to draw an interesting profile of a censor at work. Characteristically, according to Burress, the censor (1) disregards or ignores the "judgments concerning the new books of each year and the relative worth of older books [which] are recorded in standard reference works and literary journals"; (2) abstains from a "reliance . . . on professional standards of literary criticism"; (3) judges "a book based on a single episode or aspect, taken out of context"; (4) objects "to the language" in a book; (5) objects to "the ideas contained in the books"; (6) tends to act with "hidden motives" (e.g., "an attempt to annoy or to discredit a teacher for low marks given a student"); and (7) exhibits an "unwillingness to act in public ways."[3]

Burress found, too, that the nature of censorship is

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[1] Ibid., p. 2.

[2] Ibid., p. 6.

[3] Ibid., pp. 3-5.

capricious: "Any book questioned by anyone becomes 'controversial,' no matter what its merits or what the lack of qualifications of the objector."[1] Of the eighty books and seventeen periodicals cited by the respondents as having received objections during the period covered by the survey, Burress says:

> With a few exceptions the list would make a relatively good one to recommend to high school juniors and seniors. . . . The frequency of citation of most of the titles or authors in standard works of reference is evidence of the prudence of the high school libraries in stocking them.[2]

As examples of such works, Burress notes in an appendix that The Catcher in the Rye was objected to twenty-six times; 1984, fifteen times; Brave New World, eight times; The Grapes of Wrath, three times; and Of Mice and Men, three times.[3]

Nyla Herber Ahrens (1965), too, found that most of the books involved in the censorship incidents cited by her sample of 616 high school English teachers in forty-nine states appear in standard works of reference: "Almost two-thirds (65.5 per cent) of the 55 works appeared on at least one of the three basic book lists or buying guides for high school teachers and librarians: A Basic Book Collection for High Schools, published by the American Library Association; Standard Catalog for High School

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[1] Ibid., p. 2.

[2] Ibid., p. 3.

[3] Ibid., pp. 17-20.

Libraries, published by the H. W. Wilson Company; and Books for You, from the National Council of Teachers of English."[1]

Furthermore, Ahrens found that most of the books (sixty per cent) were used in eleventh or twelfth grades,[2] and most (sixty-eight per cent) were paperbacks.[3] The books most frequently involved in censorship incidents were American novels published since 1940.[4] J. D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye was cited most frequently, twenty-five times; 1984, six times; Diary of a Young Girl, five times; and Brave New World, To Kill a Mockingbird, and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, four times each. The remaining forty-nine "objectionable" books were each cited once or twice.[5] About half of the books were used as required reading, while the other half divided about equally between recommended and free reading selections.[6]

Ahrens also found that, as a group, the teachers who had been involved in a censorship incident ("censorship" group) differed from the teachers who had not been involved in a censorship incident ("no censorship" group). Compared

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[1]Ahrens, "Censorship and the Teacher of English: A Questionnaire Survey of Selected Sample of Secondary School Teachers of English," p. 69.

[2]Ibid., p. 78.

[3]Ibid., p. 76.

[4]Ibid., p. 69.

[5]Ibid., pp. 125-130, passim.

[6]Ibid., p. 76.

to the "no censorship" group, the "censorship" group tended to have more education and more recent education, more had majored in English, and more had received degrees from liberal arts colleges than from state or teachers colleges. The "censorship" group also was more apt to be teaching in the upper grades of high school, although having less teaching experience than those in the "no censorship" group. Moreover, the "censorship" group more frequently than not described themselves as "liberal," but the communities in which they taught as either "middle-of-the-road" or "conservative."[1]

Contrary, however, to the conclusion reached by Burress that there is no relation between censorship and school size or location, Ahrens discovered that over half of the "censorship" group were employed in moderately large suburban communities,[2] with schools having two or three curricular tracks serving a student population of 1,500 to 3,500.[3]

Additionally, Ahrens's "censorship" group reported professional use of more literary material (literature anthology plus required, recommended, or student-selected supplementary books) than did the "no censorship" group,

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[1] Ibid., pp. 27-39, passim.

[2] Ibid., p. 42.

[3] Ibid., p. 50.

who tended to use only a single literature anthology.[1] Paradoxically, though, the "censorship" group felt that they had less freedom in book selection than did those in the "no censorship" group.[2]

Along with Ahrens's study, Donelson's (1968)[3] and LaConte's (1967)[4] also help to identify some of the characteristics which distinguish those frequently involved in censorship incidents from those not. Donelson found from his questionnaire survey of 168 Arizona high school English teachers that the teacher most commonly involved in censorship incidents is a female English major with a master's degree, between the ages of thirty-one and forty, who has taught ten years or more in schools with enrollments over 2,000, and who sees herself as more liberal than the community in which she teaches. LaConte, unlike Donelson and Ahrens who identified the characteristics of those who were involved in censorship incidents, identified the characteristics of those who tended to censor. In brief, he found that those who tended to censor most frequently were female chairmen who felt they had little administrative

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[1] Ibid., p. 56.

[2] Ibid., p. 61.

[3] Donelson, "Censorship and Arizona Schools: 1966-1968," p. 31.

[4] LaConte, "The Relationship between Book Selection Practices and Certain Controversial Elements of Literature in Bergen County, New Jersey Public Senior High School English Departments," pp. 141-142.

responsibility, who taught four or more classes a day, who had not been involved in a censorship incident, whose school principal was responsible for ordering books, who chaired small departments in small schools in blue-collar areas, and whose schools did not have a written complaint policy.

Interestingly, Donelson's survey also reveals that many of the same books cited in LaConte's, Burress', and Ahrens's studies were involved in censorship incidents in Arizona. In all, Donelson reported that fifty-nine books were cited as those which fostered censorship incidents. The Catcher in the Rye, again, was the most frequently cited, fifteen times; Brave New World, nine times; The Ox-Bow Incident, five times; To Kill a Mockingbird and The Crucible, four times each; and 50 Great American Short Stories, Diary of a Young Girl, Black Like Me, Catch-22, A Farewell to Arms, Hawaii, 1984, and The Grapes of Wrath, each three times. The remaining forty-six books were mentioned once or twice each.[1]

A final study, James Symula's (1969), is quite unlike any other reviewed thus far, but important because it is the only one I know of which attests to the effectiveness of selection and complaint policies in preventing censor-

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[1]Donelson, "Censorship and Arizona Schools: 1966-1968," pp. 38-41.

ship.[1] However, the weakness of the study is in its method of validation. As Symula explains:

> The conclusions drawn from this study are not couched in statistics because censorship has an amorphousness about it which defies permanent description. It is for this reason that the conclusions . . . will contain many of the writer's own convictions.[2]

To arrive at these conclusions, Symula devoted fully three-fourths of his study to a review of the critical literature on The Catcher in the Rye and J. D. Salinger, the literature dealing with cases of censorship of this one novel, and a single case study of one incident of censorship of The Catcher in the Rye. The final one-fourth is devoted to a discussion of the conclusions about censorship problems that Symula has inferred from his review of this literature and the one case study.

Whether Symula's inferences and "convictions" are reliable is open to question. Nevertheless, Symula is the only researcher to present a zealous argument that schools should develop and use formal, written book selection and complaint policies if they wish to be successful in preventing censorship:

> The single most important fact brought out [in the literature and case study reviews] is how terribly unprepared many schools are to combat censorship. . . . The need here is obvious. Schools must develop sound

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[1]James Symula, "Censorship of High School Literature: A Study of the Incidents of Censorship Involving J. D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1969), p. 80.

[2]Ibid., p. 105.

> book selection policies and formal procedures for handling complaints against books; and until this is done they will continue to be at the mercy of anyone who decides that he knows best the materials that should be included in the English curriculum.[1]

The studies summarized above confirm, then, the validity of the NCTE statement that "censorship in schools is a widespread problem."[2] However, except for Symula, no investigator has attempted to confirm the validity of the NCTE's recommendation that "every school undertake the following . . . to protect the students' right to read: the establishment of a committee of teachers to consider book selection procedures and to screen complaints."[3]

Right to Read Statements

Two documents frequently cited in the literature on censorship are the NCTE's "An Open Letter to the Citizens of Our Country from the National Council of Teachers of English: The Right to Read"[4] and the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement.[5] Each asserts that the freedom to read and the freedom of access to books are basic to an enlightened, democratic society. Each, too, asserts that

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[1] Ibid., pp. 79-80.

[2] Donelson, The Students' Right to Read, p. 13.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., pp. 6-12.

[5] Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, Freedom to Read Statement (Chicago: American Library Association, May 25, 1953, revised January 28, 1972), pp. 1-3.

these freedoms are threatened by the censor and must, therefore, be reaffirmed and defended.

The intent of the NCTE to protect the right to read is clear. The Council's "An Open Letter to the Citizens of Our Country from the National Council of Teachers of English: The Right to Read" states, in part:

> The right to read, like all rights guaranteed or implied within our constitutional tradition, can be used wisely or foolishly. In many ways, education is an effort to improve the quality of choices open to man. But to deny the freedom of choice in fear that it may be unwisely used is to destroy the freedom itself. For this reason, we respect the right of individuals to be selective in their own reading. But for the same reason, we oppose efforts of individuals or groups to limit the freedom of choice of others or to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.
>
> The right of any individual not just to read but to read whatever he wants to read is basic to a democratic society. This right is based on an assumption that the educated and reading man possesses judgment and understanding and can be trusted with the determination of his own actions. In effect, the reading man is freed from the bonds of discovering all things and all facts and all truths through his own direct experiences, for his reading allows him to meet people, debate philosophies, and experience events far beyond the narrow confines of his own existence.[1]

I infer from these statements that the NCTE defines censorship as the attempt to deny or limit one's freedom to read. The Council's resolve, therefore, is to protect "the right of individuals to be selective in their own reading."[2] "An Open Letter to the Citizens of Our Country from the National Council of Teachers of English: The Right to Read" continues:

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[1] Donelson, The Students' Right to Read, p. 7.

[2] Ibid., p. 7.

> In selecting books for reading by young people, English teachers consider the contribution which each work may make to the education of the reader, its aesthetic value, its honesty, its readability for a particular group of students, and its appeal to adolescents. English teachers, however, may use different works for different purposes. The criteria for choosing a work to be read by an entire class are somewhat different from the criteria for choosing works to be read by small groups. . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> But the teacher selects books; he does not censor them. Selection implies that a teacher is free to choose this or that work, depending upon the purpose to be achieved and the student or class in question, but a book selected this year may be ignored next year, and the reverse. Censorship implies that certain works are not open to selection, this year or any year.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Moreover, the value and impact of any literary work must be examined as a whole and not in part--the impact of the entire work being more important than the words, phrases, or incidents out of which it is made.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> English teachers must be free to employ books, classic or contemporary, which do not lie to the young about the perilous but wondrous times we live in, books which talk of the fears, hopes, joys, and frustrations people experience, books about people not only as they are but as they can be. English teachers forced through the pressures of censorship to use only safe or antiseptic works are placed in the morally and intellectually untenable position of lying to their students about the nature and condition of mankind.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> What a young reader gets from any book depends both on the selection and on the reader himself. A teacher should choose books with an awareness of the student's interests, his reading ability, his mental and emotional maturity, and the values he may derive from the reading. A wide knowledge of many works, common sense, and professional dedication to students and to literature will guide the teacher in making his selections. The community that entrusts students to the care of an English teacher should also trust that teacher to exercise professional judgment in selecting or recommending books.[1]

The essence, then, of "An Open Letter to the Citizens

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[1] Ibid., pp. 7-9.

of Our Country from the National Council of Teachers of English: The Right to Read" is that since censorship denies the essential democratic guarantee to the freedom to read, American communities must jealously guard this freedom and reaffirm their trust in the "teacher to exercise professional judgment in selecting or recommending books."[1] And the English teacher, in turn, must be guided in his selection by "a wide knowledge of many works, common sense, and professional dedication to students and to literature."[2]

Like the NCTE, the American Library Association (ALA) is concerned that censorship threatens the democratic guarantee to the freedom to read. The opening paragraphs of the ALA's Freedom to Read Statement declare:

> The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.
>
> We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising his critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.
>
> We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to

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[1] Ibid., p. 9.

[2] Ibid.

> reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.[1]

The ALA's position, then, is similar to that of the NCTE. Both agree that since the freedom to read is basic to a democratic society, it is the responsibility of the citizens of a democracy to oppose all efforts which deny or limit the freedom to read. And, too, while the NCTE's "An Open Letter to the Citizens of Our Country from the National Council of Teachers of English: The Right to Read" affirms the Council's trust in the teacher's right to select books for student use, the ALA's Freedom to Read Statement affirms the Association's trust in the librarian's right to select books:

> It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.[2]

In sum, both the NCTE and the ALA agree that the public's right to read is a fundamental democratic guarantee

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[1]Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, Freedom to Read Statement, p. 1.

[2]Ibid., pp. 2-3.

and must be protected. To ensure such protection, the two professional organizations declare that the freedom to publish and to circulate books must be guarded and preserved, teachers and librarians must be entrusted with the responsibility to judge and to select books for student use, and censorship--which denies or limits the freedoms of choice and access to books--must be opposed.

Book Selection Policies

Other than in Marjorie Fiske's study (in which she concluded that "the most frequently discussed administrative aid for problems of controversiality is the written book selection policy [but that] librarians disagree as to the [policy's] efficacy")[1] and in James Symula's study (in which he concluded that "schools must develop sound book selection policies"),[2] I have found no research study which has maintained that schools, in order to prevent censorship, should adopt written book selection policies. Nevertheless, while objective evidence to support the use of such a written policy is minimal, two national professional organizations--the NCTE and the ALA--strongly recommend that such a written policy be composed and used.

The NCTE makes the following recommendation regarding written book selection policies:

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[1]Fiske, Book Selection and Censorship, p. 74.

[2]Symula, "Censorship of High School Literature: A Study of the Incidents of Censorship Involving J. D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye," p. 80.

> In each school the English department should develop its own statement explaining why literature is taught and how books are chosen for each class. This statement should be on file with the administration before any complaints are received.[1]

In justification of this recommendation, the NCTE states:

> Freedom of inquiry is essential to education in a democracy. To establish conditions essential for freedom, teachers and administrators need to follow procedures similar to those recommended here. Where schools resist unreasonable pressures, the cases are seldom publicized and students continue to read works as they wish. The English teacher can be free to teach literature, and students can be free to read whatever they wish only if informed and vigilant groups, within the profession and without, unite in resisting unfair pressures.[2]

Similarly, the ALA recommends that every school and public library formulate and use a written book selection policy:

> To combat censorship efforts from groups and individuals, every library should take certain measures to clarify policies and establish community relations. While these steps should be taken regardless of any attack or prospect of attack, they will provide a firm and clearly defined position if selection policies <u>are</u> challenged. As normal operating procedure, each library should:
>
> 1. <u>Maintain a definite materials selection policy</u>. It should be in written form and approved by the board of trustees, the school board or other administrative authority. It should apply to all materials equally. . . .[3]

While both the NCTE and the ALA recommend the adoption of a written policy, neither is very explicit about

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[1]Donelson, <u>The Students' Right to Read</u>, p. 13.

[2]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 19.

[3]American Library Association, <u>How Libraries Can Resist Censorship</u> (Chicago: American Library Association, February 1, 1962, revised January 28, 1972), p. 1.

what the policy ought to include. The NCTE, however, is relatively more comprehensive. It suggests that, at a minimum, the policy include statements explaining why literature is taught and by what standards it is chosen. The ALA, on the other hand, suggests that the policy be written, approved by administrative authorities, and applicable to all materials in the library collection.

Two affiliate groups of the ALA, however, do offer more comprehensive guides for the formulation of a written selection policy. One affiliate group, the American Association of School Librarians, offers the following statement--Policies and Procedures for Selection of School Library Materials--as a guide:

> "The following statement of policy-making with regard to instructional materials selection for the school library media center is offered as a guide for the formulation of a policy. It is believed that such a policy should be formally adopted by each school district as a basis for consistent excellence in choice of materials and as a document that can be presented to parents and other citizens for their further understanding of the purposes and standards of selection of these materials.
>
> "Patterns of Policy Making
>
> "The governing body of a school is legally responsible for all matters relating to the operation of that school. It is recommended that assumption of responsibility and the delegation of the authority for the selection of instructional materials should be adopted by the legally responsible body and then stated in a formal policy to the professionally trained personnel employed by the school.
>
> "Selection of Personnel
>
> "The responsibility for coordination of the selection of instructional materials for the school library media center should rest with the professionally

trained media personnel. Administration, faculty, students and parents should be involved in the selection process. Final decision on purchases should rest with the professional personnel in accordance with the formally adopted policy.

"Types of Materials Covered

"Criteria for evaluation and selection of all types of instructional materials should be established. Such criteria should be available in written form.

"Criteria of Selection

"The primary objective of a school library is to implement, enrich and support the educational program of the school. Criteria for instructional materials selection should implement this basic objective.

"Criteria for the selection of all instructional materials are both general, as found in the professional literature, and specific in terms of the needs of each school community.

"General criteria are stated in terms of significant descriptors of the subject; integrity of treatment; and quality of the medium--style, clarity, originality, etc.

"Specific criteria are determined by a study of the characteristics of the school's instructional program and the needs of students as affected by the community, as follows:

"Needs of the individual school program
  a. Based on knowledge of the curriculum
  b. Based on requests from administrators and teachers

"Needs of the individual student
  a. Based on knowledge of children and youth
  b. Based on requests by parents and students

"Needs from these several sources will require a wide range of instructional materials for an acceptance level of quality, on all levels of difficulty, and with a diversity of appeal; and the presentation of different points of view--ethnic, religious, political and cultural.

"Selection Tools

"Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids should be consulted as guides."[1]

The second affiliate group of the ALA to offer a comprehensive guide for the formulation of a written selection policy is the California Association of School Librarians. The recommendation of this affiliate group follow:

"Purpose of a Materials Selection Policy

"A written, board-approved materials selection policy will:

"Provide a statement of philosophy and objectives for the guidance of those involved in the procedures for selection.

"Define the role of those who share in the responsibility for the selection of instructional materials.

"Outline the techniques for the application of the criteria.

"Clarify for the community the philosophy and procedure used in evaluating and selecting instructional materials.

"Provide a procedure for the consideration of objections to the use of particular materials in the educational program.

"Development of a Materials Selection Policy

"A materials selection policy should be formulated by representatives of all groups affected by its adoption:
the library staff
the audio-visual staff
the teaching staff
the curriculum staff

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[1]American Association of School Librarians, Policies and Procedures for Selection of School Library Materials (Chicago: American Association of School Librarians, approved by the Board of Directors at the American Library Association Midwinter Conference, Chicago, 1970).

the administrative staff
the community

"The materials selection policy should be adopted officially by the governing board.

"The adopted policy should be communicated to all school personnel and to the community.

"The adopted policy should be reviewed periodically, and revised if necessary.

"Content of a Materials Selection Policy

"A materials selection policy should include:

"A statement of the district's philosophy of materials selection such as is given in the School Library Bill of Rights of the American Association of School Librarians.

"A statement that the governing board of the district is legally responsible for the selection of instructional materials, and detailing the delegation of this responsibility to appropriate certified personnel.

"A statement of the criteria to be used in the evaluation of materials, including materials offered as gifts, and sponsored materials.

"An outline of the procedures to be applied in the evaluation and selection of materials.

"An outline of the procedures to be applied in considering objections to the use of particular materials in the instructional program."[1]

In summary, then, little objective evidence exists to suggest that a written book selection policy will help school districts, libraries, and English departments to inhibit censorship; however, an ample amount of literature

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[1]California Association of School Librarians, Instructional Materials; Selection Policies and Procedures (Daly City, Calif.: California Association of School Librarians, 1965), pp. 3-7.

exists which recommends that a written book selection policy be composed and used. And besides the recommendations published by the NCTE, the ALA, the American Association of School Librarians, and the California Association of School Librarians which describe in general the purposes, development, and content of a materials selection policy, literally dozens of other documents are available which include numerous examples of specific selection policies used by various schools and libraries. Not all can be reviewed in detail here, but since two are especially helpful to those who are seeking models for their own school district's selection policy, I will summarize briefly their content.

The first publication, Instructional Materials; Selection Policies and Materials,[1] includes numerous illustrative excerpts from selection policies used in California public schools and libraries, elementary through junior college. Included are fourteen examples of statements of philosophy and objectives, fourteen of legal responsibility and its delegation, twenty-eight of criteria for evaluation of materials, sixteen of procedures for evaluation and selection, and thirteen of consideration of objections to materials in use. The second publication, Book Selection Policies in American Libraries,[2] includes the

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[1] Ibid., pp. 1-61.

[2] Calvin J. Boyer and Nancy L. Eaton, eds., Book Selection Policies in American Libraries (Austin, Texas: Armadillo Press, 1971), pp. 1-222.

whole texts of thirty-one exemplary book selection policies--ten used by colleges and universities, fourteen by public libraries, and seven by elementary and secondary schools.

Book Complaint Policies

Although Ahrens, Burress, Donelson, and LaConte found that between fourteen per cent and thirty per cent of the schools they surveyed had written book complaint policies (see Table 1, page 15), none offered any information about the effects of these policies on the incidence of censorship. Thus, as I found in my investigation of the literature on written book selection policies, the literature on written book complaint policies offers little objective evidence to suggest that such a policy inhibits censorship. Nevertheless, the NCTE and the ALA strongly recommend that such a written policy be composed and used.

The NCTE makes the following recommendations about procedures to be followed when a complaint is received:

> If the complainant telephones, listen courteously and refer him to the teacher involved. That teacher should be the first person to discuss the book with the person objecting to its use.
>
> If the complainant is not satisfied, invite him to file his complaint in writing, but make no commitments, admissions of guilt, or threats. Indicate that a form for the complaint will be sent to him.
>
> If the complainant writes, contact the teacher involved and let that teacher call the complainant. . . . If the complainant is not satisfied, invite him to file his complaint in writing on a form to be sent to him. . . .[1]

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[1]Donelson, The Students' Right to Read, pp. 16-17.

The advantage of such a standardized procedure, according to the NCTE, is that it

> . . . will take the sting from the first outburst of criticism. When the responsible objector learns that he will be given a fair hearing through following the proper channels, he is more likely to be satisfied. The idle censor, on the other hand, may well be discouraged from taking further action. . . .[1]

Although there may be more hope than certainty in the NCTE's claim that their procedure will appeal to "the responsible objector" and discourage "the idle censor," the recommended procedure of having the objector file his complaint in writing is likely to "take the sting from the first outburst of criticism." The form the NCTE recommends be used--"Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Work"[2]--asks the objector to reflect seriously on a number of issues concerning the book and his objection; it asks him, in effect, to evaluate the book with reason and insight.

Once the complainant completes the form and submits it to the proper school authority, the NCTE recommends the following procedure ensue:

> The committee reviewing complaints should be available on short notice to consider the completed "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Work" and to call in the complainant and the teacher involved for a conference. Members of the committee should have reevaluated the work in advance of the meeting, and the group should be prepared to explain its findings. Membership of the committee should ordinarily include an administrator, the English department chairman, and at

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[1] Ibid., p. 17.

[2] Ibid., p. 18, a copy of "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Work" is included in Appendix A, p. 144.

> least two classroom teachers of English. But the department might consider the advisability of including members from the community and the local or state NCTE affiliate. As a matter of course, recommendations from the committee would be forwarded to the superintendent, who would in turn submit them to the board of education, the legally constituted authority in the school.[1]

The ALA recommends similar but less detailed procedures:

> To combat censorship efforts from groups and individuals, every library should take certain measures to clarify policies and establish community relations. While these steps should be taken regardless of any attack or prospect of attack, they will provide a firm and clearly defined position if selection policies are challenged. As normal operating procedure, each library should:
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> . . . . . .
>
> 2. Maintain a clearly defined method for handling complaints. Basic requirements should be that the complaint be filed in writing and the complainant be properly identified before his request is considered. Action should be deferred until full consideration by appropriate administrative authority.[2]

Additionally, the American Association of School Librarians states that one responsibility of the school library is:

> To provide a written statement, approved by the local Boards of Education, of the procedures for meeting the challenge of censorship of materials in school library media centers.[3]

And the California Association of School Librarians suggests that "a materials selection policy should include . . . an

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[1] Ibid., pp. 17-18.

[2] American Library Association Council, How Libraries Can Resist Censorship, p. 1.

[3] American Association of School Librarians, School Library Bill of Rights for School Library Media Programs (Chicago: American Library Association, approved by American Association of School Librarians Board of Directors, June, 1969).

outline of the procedures to be applied in considering objections to the use of particular materials in the instructional program."[1]

Besides the recommendations of the NCTE, the ALA, the American Association of School Librarians, and the California Association of School Librarians which describe only generally the purpose and content of a complaint policy, there is an abundance of available publications which include examples of specific policies used by various schools and libraries. Two of these publications are especially helpful to those who are seeking models for their own school district's complaint policy--the same two I mentioned earlier (page 40) as helpful aids in composing a book selection policy: Instructional Materials; Selection Policies and Materials[2] and Book Selection Policies in American Libraries.[3]

However, a plethora of recommendations and sample policies notwithstanding, none of the literature I reviewed gives any reliable evidence that a written book complaint policy (or, as mentioned earlier, a written book selection policy) helps to inhibit or resolve censorship.

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[1]California Association of School Librarians, Instructional Materials; Selection Policies and Materials, p. 7.

[2]Ibid., pp. 1-61.

[3]Boyer and Eaton, Book Selection Policies in American Libraries, pp. 1-222.

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURES

Design of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to determine the comparative effectiveness of various book selection and book complaint policies used by a selected sample of public high school English departments on the inhibition or resolution of censorship. Toward this end, I used a three-stage process of investigation.

The first stage consisted of locating and identifying the nature of various high school book selection policies, book complaint policies, and censorship incidents. I did this through a questionnaire survey, one which asked a selected sample of 224 public high school English department chairmen in Michigan to send copies of (or to explain briefly, if no written policy were used) their book selection and book complaint policies and to describe briefly any censorship incident encountered during the school years 1967-1968, 1968-1969, and the first half of 1969-1970.

Since such information was all I needed to accommodate the limited purpose of this study, I felt that the questionnaire survey was the most efficient and profitable method of retrieving the information. The

likelihood that additional survey methods (e.g., personal interviews or case studies of particular censorship incidents) would yield significant information not provided by the questionnaire seemed remote. Additionally, as the review of literature in Chapter I reveals, questionnaire surveys were used widely and successfully in earlier empirical studies of censorship and book selection practices; therefore, I felt a questionnaire survey would serve my purpose successfully as well.

The second stage of the investigation consisted of a simple numerical tabulation of the questionnaire responses. Its purpose was to reveal the number of schools with and without written policies and the number of schools with and without encounters with censorship incidents.

The third stage consisted of an analysis of the various policies and an examination of the censorship incidents. In this stage the purpose was, first, to compare the content and quality of the various policies and, second, to determine the comparative success or failure of these policies in inhibiting or resolving censorship.

The remaining part of this chapter explains in greater detail the procedures used in each of these three stages.

Questionnaire Survey

Selecting the Sample

The sample chosen to receive the questionnaire was

selected by a process of elimination from the universe of English teachers. I can claim no scientific precision for this selection method, nor do I offer any apologies for the relatively small number finally selected--224. For, as chance and the mythical law of averages would have it, the sample turned out to be a fairly representative cross section of teachers, schools, and communities that exist in the larger universal population. And, accidentally or not, the sample served the purpose for which it was intended; it provided a fair representation of various book selection policies, book complaint policies, and censorship incidents in Michigan public high school English departments.

The first decision to be made was who, of all the English teachers, should be queried. With a minimum of pondering, I decided that the questionnaire should be sent only to English department chairmen. I assumed that they, of all English teachers, were likely to be most familiar with their schools' book selection and book complaint policies, as well as the manner in which censorship incidents had been handled in their schools during the two and one-half years covered by the survey. Additionally, I assumed that the chairmen were experienced teachers of English, not likely to be new to their schools or unfamiliar with the literature taught therein. And lastly, I assumed that their responses would be more representative of the school districts' persuasion on book selection and censorship than would any response from a teacher further removed from the

administrative hierarchy.

The second decision involved the choice of the kind of school to be studied. This decision was simple. As illustrated in the review of censorship studies in Chapter I, previous research has shown that the primary arena for censorship bouts is in the public high schools. Public high schools, therefore, were chosen as the most appropriate kind to be studied.

The next decision concerned the location of the schools to be surveyed. I settled ultimately on a plan of geography which included Michigan's six largest cities and their metropolitan areas. I assumed that this selection of cities would provide a sufficient number of schools which, by chance, would in turn provide a sufficient number of censorship incidents, book selection policies, and book complaint policies worth study.

Michigan's six largest cities, according to the 1970 Census Bureau figures, are Detroit, Grand Rapids, Flint, Lansing, Saginaw, and Kalamazoo. (The cities of Livonia, Dearborn, Royal Oak, St. Clair Shores, Ann Arbor, Warren, and Westland are each larger than Kalamazoo but are incorporated in the metropolitan area of Detroit and consequently are not included separately as part of the list of the six largest cities.)[1] The metropolitan areas of these

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[1]George E. Delury, ed., 1973 Edition: The World Almanac and Book of Facts (New York: Newspaper Enterprise Association, Inc., 1972), pp. 168-169.

six cities were identified by the maps of telephone service areas provided in the first pages of the current telephone directories of these six cities. In a few instances, however, I extended these areas to include outlying rural towns in an effort to include other than simply urban and suburban localities in the sample.

I then consulted a booklet entitled Michigan Accredited Schools, 1969-1970[1] and found the names of all the accredited public high schools in these six cities and their metropolitan areas. The number of schools amounted to 224. Had I included all the Detroit city high schools the number in the sample would have been increased by twenty. But, since the book selection procedure in the Detroit city school system is largely an administrative function of a board of education committee and does not vary among schools, I surveyed just two schools, expecting at least one to respond. (One did.) All the public high schools in all the other cities, however, were included in the sample.

Description of the Sample

Composing the sample were 224 English department chairmen who taught in the public high schools of Michigan's six largest cities and their metropolitan areas. According to the enrollment figures printed in the booklet Michigan Accredited Schools, 1969-1970, 108 schools were Class A

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[1]Bureau of School Services, Michigan Accredited Schools, 1969-1970 (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Bureau of School Services, 1970), pp. 1-12.

(1,200 or more students), eighty-one schools were Class B (550 to 1,199 students), thirty-four schools were Class C (300 to 499 students), and one school was Class D (less than 300 students). The smallest school surveyed had a 1969-1970 student enrollment of 214; the largest, a student enrollment of 3,255.[1]

Construction of the Questionnaire

I inspected questionnaires used by other investigators to survey censorship incidents and book selection practices but found that they did not contain questions which led to an identification of the content and quality of book selection and complaint policies. I therefore designed my own questionnaire.[2]

Since I desired little information from the chairmen, my questionnaire was comparatively short. Only three items were considered essential: (1) the nature of the schools' book selection policies, (2) the nature of the schools' book complaint policies, and (3) the nature of the schools' encounters with censorship incidents during the school years 1967-1968, 1968-1969, and the first half of 1969-1970. Therefore, using as few questions as possible without sacrificing adequate coverage, I devised a one-page, ten-item questionnaire. I conjectured that such brevity had the favorable attribute of allowing the questionnaire to be

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[1] Ibid., pp. 1-12, passim.

[2] A copy is included in Appendix B, pp. 149-150.

completed quickly and simply, thereby encouraging a greater percentage of response than would the longer instruments used previously by others.

A pilot study using this questionnaire was subsequently conducted. Ten experienced public high school teachers of English in five different schools were asked to complete the questionnaire and, in the process, to make any suggestions they felt would improve it. Apparently the teachers were satisfied with the questionnaire, for only minor changes in the wording of two questions resulted from their comments. Then, with these word changes made, the questionnaire was given to Dr. Murray Clemens Johnson, Professor of Education and Chairman of the Committee on Educational Research in the School of Education in the University of Michigan. Dr. Johnson, too, appeared satisfied with the intent and substance of the questionnaire, but advised that a single, open-ended question be added that would allow the respondent to expand or clarify any answer on the questionnaire.

The final questionnaire, then, did not differ greatly from that used in the pilot study; minor word changes in two questions and the addition of one open-ended question were the only alterations.

Description of the Questionnaire

The first question asked, "Does your English department or school have a written book selection policy or

procedure explaining how books are selected for student use?" If the chairman responded "yes," he was asked to include a copy of this policy when returning the questionnaire. If he responded "no," he was requested to answer item two: "If your English department or school has no written policy or procedure, please explain briefly how you or any member of your department would select books for student use." Question three then asked, "Does your English department or school have a written policy or procedure for handling complaints about the books selected?" If the response was "yes," the chairman was asked to include a copy when returning the questionnaire. If the answer was "no," the chairman was requested to answer item four: "If your English department or school has no written book complaint policy, please explain briefly how you or any member of your department would handle a complaint."

Obtaining the responses to these four items was necessary in order to accomplish two of the purposes of this study: (1) to describe the content of the various book selection and book complaint policies used by this sample and (2) to analyze the effect these various selection and complaint policies have on the inhibition or resolution of censorship.

The fifth question asked, "During the past two and one-half years has anyone objected to or asked for the removal of a book an English teacher has used in class or recommended to a student?" If the chairman responded

negatively to question five, he had completed the questionnaire. An affirmative answer, however, invited the chairman to answer five more questions, all dealing with the book(s) cited as "objectionable." Question six asked, "If you answered 'yes' to the above question, which book received an objection?" Question seven asked, "What was the objection, and who (i.e., parent, teacher, etc.) initiated the objection?" Question eight asked, "How was the book being used [required, recommended, free reading, or other] when it received the objection?"

In asking questions six, seven, and eight the intent was not simply to accumulate a long list of objections and construe them as instances of censorship. Rather, I hoped to locate the sources and identify the nature of all the objections, objections which did result or conceivably might have resulted in the removal of a book.

More reliable evidence of actual censorship was obtained from the chairmen's responses to questions nine and ten. Question nine asked, "What happened to the book [retained for use, removed from use, or other] after the objection was resolved?" If retained, the book could not be said to have been censored, even though the attempt had been made. On the other hand, if removed, I determined the book had been censored. (I trusted that the teacher[s] concerned with the selection of the book had used professional criteria when deciding upon its adoption for student use and that the removal of the book necessarily, then, had to

involve the use of nonprofessional criteria.) Such information was important. Because this study would analyze the effects of various selection and complaint policies on the inhibition or resolution of censorship, actual instances of books being removed had to be isolated from mere objections to books. Question ten asked, "How serious a problem [very serious, serious, not very serious, not at all serious] did the objection pose for your department?" Ideally, I wanted the information from questions nine and ten to help me to identify which schools were aided or hindered by their particular policies in resolving their censorship incidents.

Item eleven--"If you would like to make any comments clarifying or expanding your responses, include them on the back of this page."--was simply an attempt to encourage a response to any matter the chairman felt was not sufficiently covered in his other responses to the questionnaire.

Sending the Questionnaire

On February 21, 1970, I mailed the questionnaire to the 224 English department chairmen comprising the initial sample. One hundred and twenty-seven chairmen returned completed questionnaires.

I later sent a second letter of request to seventeen of the 127 chairmen who returned the questionnaire, attempting to collect copies of the written book selection

policies these seventeen chairmen indicated their schools had but did not send. Twelve chairmen responded to this second letter; five returned copies of their schools' policies, and, for various reasons, seven did not.

Questionnaire Response Tabulation

Since the questionnaires to be tabulated were relatively few, short, and uncomplicated, the responses were sorted and counted by hand.

The first step in the tabulation involved counting only the responses to questions one through five, by which I was able to identify and compare the number of schools with and without written book selection policies, written book complaint policies, and objections to books.

The second step involved counting the responses to questions six through ten, using only those questionnaires which contained an affirmative response to question five indicating that an objection had been lodged against a book. I thereby was able to identify the titles and authors of the books objected to; the nature of the objection; the objector; whether the book was required, recommended, free reading, or other; whether the book was retained or removed from use; and whether the objection posed a very serious, serious, not very serious, or not at all serious problem for the particular English department.

The final step involved a comparative analysis of the policies' respective content and quality, as well as the

policies' effects on the inhibition or resolution of censorship. Information about the written policies was obtained from copies of those policies sent to me by the chairmen responding affirmatively to questions one and three of the questionnaire; information about the selection and complaint procedures used in schools without written policies was obtained from the responses to questions two and four of the questionnaire.

Hypotheses

As mentioned in the Introduction, I sought to validate three hypotheses in this study, all three derived from the literature reviewed in Chapter I.

1. Most English departments do not have a written policy explaining the procedures and criteria used to select books.
2. Most English departments do not have a written policy explaining the procedures used to acknowledge and resolve objections to books selected or recommended.
3. English departments with no written policy are less successful in inhibiting or resolving censorship than English departments with one or both of the written policies.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section contains a summary of the questionnaire responses; the second, a description of the book selection and book complaint policies used by the schools in the sample; the third, a quantitative analysis of the effect of the written policies on the inhibition or resolution of censorship; and the fourth, a qualitative analysis of the effect of the written policies on the inhibition or resolution of censorship.

Section 1: Questionnaire Responses

Table 4 presents the distribution of responses to questions one, three, and five, answered by all the 127 chairmen who returned a questionnaire. (Responses to questions two and four are not included in Table 4 since these responses were relatively lengthy explanations of selection and complaint procedures used in schools not having written policies. The responses to questions two and four are presented in Section 2 of this chapter.) As Table 4 illustrates, 103 of 127 chairmen reported that their departments or schools did not have a written book selection

policy, and seventy-eight of 127 reported that their departments or schools did not have a written book complaint policy. Nearly the same number of chairmen, however, reported having received objections as reported having not received objections.

TABLE 4

CHAIRMEN'S RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS ONE, THREE, AND FIVE

Questionnaire Items	Response	
	Yes	No
1. Does your English department or school have a written policy or procedure explaining how books are selected for student use?	24 (18.9%)	103 (81.1%)
2. Does your English department or school have a written policy or procedure for handling complaints about the books selected?	49 (38.6%)	78 (61.4%)
3. During the past two and one-half years has anyone objected to or asked for the removal of a book an English teacher has used in class or recommended to a student?	64 (50.4%)	63 (49.6%)

When comparing, by size, those schools with and without written policies and objections and removals, the data reveal that the larger the school the more likely the chance that it will have a written book selection policy, a written book complaint policy, and objections to books. As

Table 5, page 60, shows, proportionately more Class A schools have written policies and proportionately more have received objections than Class B or C schools. The data show, on the other hand, that the smaller the school the more likely the chance that it will have no written policy and will remove from use an "objectionable" book; Table 5 shows that proportionately more Class C schools have neither written policy and proportionately more have removed "objectionable" books than Class B or A schools.

Questions six through ten on the questionnaire were answered only by those sixty-four chairmen who responded affirmatively that their schools had received an objection to a book. (The other sixty-three chairmen were told that they had completed the questionnaire by responding to question five with a negative answer.) A tabulation of the chairmen's responses to these questions appears in Table 6, following on pages 61 through 72, which lists alphabetically the titles of all the "objectionable" books mentioned by the respondents, as well as information about the identity of the objector, the nature of the objection, how the book was being used, whether the book was retained for use or removed from use, and how serious a problem the objection posed for the individual department.

As Table 6 reveals, forty-six different books, in ninety-nine separate instances, were found "objectionable." Of these, The Catcher in the Rye was by far the most frequent target; it was objected to twenty-eight times. The

TABLE 5

COMPARISON, BY SIZE, OF SCHOOLS WITH AND WITHOUT WRITTEN POLICIES, OBJECTIONS, AND BOOK REMOVALS

Size	Written Selection Policy		Written Complaint Policy		Both Written Policies		Neither Written Policy		Objection(s) Received		Removed "Objectionable" Book(s)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Class A	17	43	33	27	15	45	25	35	33	27	7	26
Class B	6	46	14	38	5	47	37	15	28	24	8	20
Class C	1	14	2	13	1	14	13	2	3	12	1	2
Total	24	103	49	78	21	106	75	52	64	63	16	48

TABLE 6

CHAIRMEN'S RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS
SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT, NINE AND TEN

"Objectionable" Book	Objection	Objector
1. Airport	a. Sex	a. ?
2. Algiers Motel Incident, The	a. Language	a. Parent
3. Black Boy	a. Obscenity	a. Parent
	b. Obscenity	b. Parent + student
	c. Race	c. Parent
4. Black Like Me	a. Language	a. ?
	b. Racism	b. Parent
	c. Racism	c. Parent
5. Boston Strangler, The	a. Language	a. Parent
6. Brave New World	a. Obscene	a. Parent
	b. ?	b. Parent
	c. Unfit for students	c. Parent
	d. Sex	d. Parent
	e. Nature of book	e. Minister
	f. ?	f. Parent
	g. Sex	g. Parent
7. Catcher in the Rye, The	a. Language	a. Parent
	b. Language	b. Parent

TABLE 6--Continued

How Used	How Resolved	How Serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Free	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
b. Required	b. Retained	b. Not very serious
c. Required	c. Removed	c. Serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
b. Required	b. Retained	b. Serious
c. Required	c. Retained	c. Not at all serious
a. Free	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
b. Recommended	b. Retained	b. Not very serious
c. Recommended	c. Retained	c. Not at all serious
d. Required	d. Retained	d. Not at all serious
e. Required	e. Retained	e. Not at all serious
f. Required	f. Retained	f. Not very serious
g. Required	g. Retained	g. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
b. Recommended	b. Removed	b. Not very serious

TABLE 6--Continued

"Objectionable" Book	Objection	Objector
	c. Language	c. ?
	d. Language	d. Parent
	e. Language	e. Parent
	f. Language	f. Parent
	g. Obscene	g. Parent
	h. ?	h. Parent
	i. Language	i. Parent
	j. Obscene	j. Parent, teacher, + minister
	k. Language + obscene	k. Parent
	l. Language	l. Parent
	m. Language	m. Principal
	n. Language	n. Parent
	o. ?	o. Parent
	p. Obscene	p. Parent
	q. Language	q. Parent
	r. Language	r. Parent
	s. Language	s. Parent + priest
	t. Language	t. Parent
	u. Language	u. Parent
	v. Dirty	v. Principal
	w. ?	w. Parent
	x. Language	x. Parent
	y. Language	y. Parent

TABLE 6--Continued

How Used	How Resolved	How Serious
c. Recommended	c. Retained	c. Not at all serious
d. Free	d. Removed	d. Not very serious
e. Free	e. Removed	e. Serious
f. Required	f. Removed	f. Very serious
g. Recommended	g. Retained	g. Not very serious
h. Required	h. Retained	h. Serious
i. Required	i. Retained	i. Not at all serious
j. Recommended	j. Retained	j. Serious
k. Required	k. Retained	k. Not very serious
l. Required	l. Retained	l. Very serious
m. Required	m. Retained	m. Not at all serious
n. Required	n. Retained	n. Not at all serious
o. Recommended	o. Removed	o. Not very serious
p. Free	p. Retained	p. Very serious
q. Recommended	q. Removed	q. Serious
r. Recommended	r. Retained	r. Very serious
s. Required	s. Removed	s. Not at all serious
t. Recommended	t. Retained	t. Not at all serious
u. Required	u. Retained	u. Not at all serious
v. Required	v. Removed	v. Very serious
w. Recommended	w. Retained	w. Not very serious
x. Free	x. Removed	x. Not at all serious
y. Required	y. Retained	y. Not very serious

TABLE 6--Continued

"Objectionable" Book	Objection	Objector
	z. Dirty + sacrilegious	z. Parent
	aa. Sex	aa. Parent
	bb. ?	bb. Parent
8. Choice of Weapons, A	a. Sex, race, + language	a. Parent + teacher
9. Confessions of Nat Turner, The	a. Dirty	a. Principal
10. Day the Whores Came Out to Play Tennis, The	a. Language	a. Superintendent
11. Fail-Safe	a. Realistic + depressing	a. Parent
12. Flowers for Algernon	a. ?	a. Parent
13. Good Earth, The	a. Sex	a. Priest
14. Grapes of Wrath, The	a. Filth	a. Parent
15. Great Goodness of Life	a. Race	a. Parent
16. Huckleberry Finn	a. Race	a. NAACP
	b. Race	b. Parent
17. In the Heat of the Night	a. Sex	a. Parent

TABLE 6--Continued

How Used	How Resolved	How Serious
z. Required	z. Retained	z. Not at all serious
aa. Recommended	aa. Removed	aa. Very serious
bb. Recommended	bb. Retained	bb. Not very serious
a. Free	a. Removed	a. Not at all serious
a. Recommended	a. Removed	a. Not very serious
a. Required	a. Removed	a. Serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
a. Required	a. Removed	a. Not very serious
b. Required	b. Retained	b. Not very serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious

TABLE 6--Continued

"Objectionable" Book	Objection	Objector
18. Invisible Man (Ellison)	a. Language + sex	a. Parent
19. Jordi	a. Sex	a. Parent
20. Lawd Today	a. Language	a. Parent
21. Lord of the Flies	a. Sex b. ? c. Sex	a. Parent b. Parent c. Parent
22. Love and Sex in Plain Language	a. ?	a. John Birch Society
23. Madame Bovary	a. Dirty	a. Parent
24. Manchild in a Promised Land	a. Obscene b. Language	a. Minister b. Parent
25. Naked Ape, The	a. Sex	a. Parent
26. Nigger	a. Language b. Language c. Language d. Language	a. Parent b. Student c. Parent d. Parent
27. Of Mice and Men	a. Language	a. Parent
28. One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest	a. ?	a. Parent
29. Patch of Blue	a. Language	a. Parent

TABLE 6--Continued

How Used	How Resolved	How Serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
b. Required	b. Retained	b. Serious
c. Required	c. Retained	c. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Serious
b. Recommended	b. Removed	b. Not very serious
a. Free	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
b. Required	b. Retained	b. Not at all serious
c. Recommended	c. Removed	c. Very serious
d. Required	d. Retained	d. Not at all serious
a. Recommended	a. Removed	a. Very serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not very serious

TABLE 6--Continued

"Objectionable" Book	Objection	Objector
	b. Race + language	b. Parent
30. Portnoy's Complaint	a. Theme + language	a. Parent
31. Power and the Glory, The	a. Obscene	a. Parent
32. Rabbit, Run	a. Sex	a. Principal
33. Romeo and Juliet	a. Dirty	a. Parent
	b. Content	b. Parent
34. Rosemary's Baby	a. Subject matter	a. Parent
35. Separate Peace, A	a. Dirty	a. Principal + janitor
	b. Dirty	b. Parent
36. Skin of Our Teeth, The	a. Sacrilegious	a. Parent
37. Stoptime	a. Language	a. Parent
38. Stranger, The	a. Immoral	a. Parent
39. To Kill a Mockingbird	a. Sex	a. Parent
	b. Race	b. Parent
	c. Racism	c. Minister
	d. Sex	d. Parent
	e. Language	e. Parent

TABLE 6--Continued

How Used	How Resolved	How Serious
b. Required	b. Retained	b. Not very serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
a. Required	a. Removed	a. Not very serious
a. Required b. Required	a. Retained b. Removed	a. Not very serious b. Not very serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required b. Required	a. Retained b. Retained	a. Not very serious b. Not very serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required b. Required c. Required d. Required e. Required	a. Retained b. Retained c. Retained d. Retained e. Retained	a. Not at all serious b. Not at all serious c. Not very serious d. Not at all serious e. Not very serious

TABLE 6--Continued

"Objectionable" Book	Objection	Objector
40. Up the Down Staircase	a. Language	a. Parent
41. West Side Story	a. Language	a. Parent
42. What Makes Sammy Run?	a. Content	a. Parent
43. Young Lions, The	a. Sex	a. Parent + teacher
44. 1984	a. Sex b. ? c. Dirty	a. Parent b. Parent c. Parent
45. ?	a. ?	a. Parent
46. ?	a. Language + Drinking	a. Parent

TABLE 6--Continued

How Used	How Resolved	How Serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious
a. Recommended b. Recommended c. Required	a. Retained b. Retained c. Retained	a. Not very serious b. Not very serious c. Not at all serious
a. Recommended	a. Retained	a. Not at all serious
a. Required	a. Retained	a. Not very serious

nearest rival to Salinger's book was Brave New World with seven objections, To Kill a Mockingbird was next with five objections, while Dick Gregory's autobiography, Nigger, received four objections.

The Catcher in the Rye was also the most frequently censored book; it was removed from use in ten of the twenty-eight instances where someone objected. Brave New World and To Kill a Mockingbird, on the other hand, were never removed, even though they were the books receiving the second and third most objections. Another ten books, however, were each removed once: A Choice of Weapons, Black Boy, The Confessions of Nat Turner, Huckleberry Finn, Of Mice and Men, Manchild in a Promised Land, Nigger, Rabbit, Run, Romeo and Juliet, and The Day the Whores Came Out to Play Tennis. Thus, twenty separate instances of censorship involving eleven different books were recorded.

And, too, the questionnaire data reveal that these twenty separate instances of censorship occurred in sixteen different schools. Thus, exactly one-quarter of the schools receiving objections (sixty-four in all) removed at least one "objectionable" book.

Nor surprisingly (for Ahrens[1] and Burress[2] found about the same to be true), all but one of the eleven books removed from use appear on lists of reading material recom-

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[1]See pages 23-24.

[2]See page 23.

mended for high school students by either the ALA or the NCTE. The ALA's Senior High School Library Catalog (1970), for instance, lists Of Mice and Men, The Confessions of Nat Turner, Romeo and Juliet, and The Catcher in the Rye. In the NCTE's publication Negro Literature for High School Students (1968) appear Manchild in a Promised Land, Nigger, and Black Boy. And in either Books for You (1970) or Good Reading (1970), both prepared by the NCTE, appear Huckleberry Finn and Rabbit, Run.

In addition to giving the titles of the books objected to and the number of times these books were removed, Table 6 also reveals that parents' objections, besides being most frequent, accounted for the greatest number of book removals. The NAACP, principals/administrators, and teachers, however, seemed to have a greater "success" in getting books removed than did parents, as Table 7 on page 75 illustrates.

Table 6, found earlier on pages 61 through 72, also lists the reasons cited for objecting to the books. Table 8 on page 76 categorizes these data, showing the nature of the objection as cited by the respondents, the frequency of the objection, and the frequency with which the objection resulted in a book's removal.

In composing Table 8 I found that it was difficult to define and categorize all the different objections cited by the respondents. Many of the reasons for objection cited (e.g., "unfit for students," "content," "immoral," "dirty,"

TABLE 7

CENSORSHIP INCIDENTS: THE OBJECTORS

Objector	Number of Objections	Number of Removals
Parent	83	15
Clergyman	6	1
Principal/administrator	6	4
Teacher	3	1
Unknown	3	0
Student	2	0
Janitor	1	0
John Birch Society	1	0
NAACP	1	1
Total	106[a]	22[b]

[a]In five instances, two people joined in the objection. In another instance, three people joined in the objection. Thus, the total number of separate incidents of objection remains as ninety-nine.

[b]In two instances, two people joined in the objection which resulted in a removal. Thus, the total number of separate incidents of removal remains as twenty.

TABLE 8

CENSORSHIP INCIDENTS: THE REASONS

Reason for Objection	Number of Objections	Number of Removals
Language	39	12
Sex	17	3
Unknown	12	1
Race/racism	10	3
Obscenity	8	0
Dirty/filth	9	2
Content	3	1
Realistic/depressing	2	0
Theme	1	0
Drinking	1	0
Subject matter	1	0
Sacrilegious	2	0
Immoral	1	0
Unfit for students	1	0
Nature of book	1	0
Total	108[a]	22[b]

[a]In seven separate incidents, two objections were lodged against a single book; in one incident, three objections. Thus, the total number of separate incidents of objection remains as ninety-nine.

[b]In one instance, three different objections resulted in a single book's removal. Thus, the total number of separate incidents of removal remains as twenty.

"subject matter," and "nature of book") seemed so vague as to qualify as non-reasons. Moreover, none of the reasons for objection cited by the respondents was ever carefully defined; thus, I could not infer exactly the meaning of such frequently cited objections as "language," "sex," or "race/racism." Such difficulties, I think, were caused by the questionnaire item: since the phrasing of the question did not give adequate guidance to the respondents, the responses were not specific and clear.

Nevertheless, even given such difficulties with definition and categorization, Table 8 reveals that the number of objections to "language" far exceeds the other listed reasons for objection. Yet, however numerous seem the objections to "language" (thirty-nine) and the number of removals resulting from this objection (twelve), other less frequent forms of objection also resulted in high proportions of book removals. For instance, three removals resulted from the seventeen objections to "sex"; one removal from the three objections to "content"; three from the ten objections to "race/racism"; and two from the nine objections to "dirty/filth."

The questionnaire responses tabulated on pages 61-72 also show that most of the books found "objectionable" were <u>required</u> reading material. <u>Recommended</u> reading material was next most frequently objected to, while <u>free</u> reading material received relatively few objections. However, the pattern was exactly reversed for the rate of removal for

each category; as Table 9 illustrates, proportionately more free reading books were removed than recommended books and proportionately more recommended books were removed than required books.

TABLE 9

CENSORSHIP INCIDENTS: USE OF BOOKS

Use	Number of Responses	Number of Removals
Required reading	57	8
Recommended reading	34	8
Free reading	8	4
Total	99	20

Asked in the final question on the questionnaire how serious a problem the objections posed for their departments, eighty-one chairmen replied "not very serious" or "not at all serious," even though in eleven of these instances the objection resulted in a book's removal. Eighteen chairmen, on the other hand, responded that their departments were posed with a "very serious" or "serious" problem by the objections, and these eighteen experienced nine removals. Table 10 on page 79 categorizes these responses.

TABLE 10

CENSORSHIP INCIDENTS: SERIOUSNESS OF PROBLEM

Seriousness of Problem	Number of Responses	Number of Removals
Very serious	8	5
Serious	10	4
Not very serious	38	8
Not at all serious	43	3
Total	99	20

The questionnaire data show, then, that eleven of the twenty book removals (fifty-five per cent) were said to have resulted from objections which posed "not very serious" or "not at all serious" problems for the individual departments; nine of the twenty book removals (forty-five per cent), on the other hand, were said to have resulted from objections which posed "very serious" or "serious" problems for the individual departments. These data suggest (but do not necessarily prove) that the eleven schools which had "not very serious" or "not at all serious" problems in the handling of the objections which resulted in book removals were quite willing to yield to censorship.

Summary of questionnaire responses

1. Approximately nineteen per cent (twenty-four of 127) of the sample schools have a written book selection policy.
2. Approximately thirty-eight per cent (forty-nine of 127) of the sample schools have a written book complaint policy.
3. Approximately seventeen per cent (twenty-one of 127) of the sample schools have both a written selection and a written complaint policy.
4. Approximately fifty-nine per cent (seventy-five of 127) of the sample schools have neither written policy.
5. Approximately fifty per cent (sixty-four of 127) of the sample schools received at least one objection to a book used by or recommended to a student during the two and one-half years covered by the survey.
6. Exactly twenty-five per cent (sixteen of sixty-four) of the sample schools which received an objection removed from use at least one of the "objectionable" books.
7. The larger the school, the more likely is the chance that it will have a written book selection policy, a written book complaint policy, or both policies, and will receive objections to books.

8. The smaller the school, the more likely is the chance that it will have neither written policy and will remove from use "objectionable" books.
9. Forty-six different books received at least one objection during the two and one-half years covered by the survey.
10. Ninety-nine objections to books were received by the sample schools.
11. The Catcher in the Rye received the most objections (twenty-eight) and was the book most frequently removed (ten times).
12. Eleven different books were removed from use as a result of an objection.
13. In twenty separate instances books were removed from use as a result of an objection.
14. All but one of the eleven books removed from use are endorsed by either the ALA or NCTE as recommended high school reading material.
15. Parents, singly or in conjunction with others, lodged most of the objections (eighty-three of ninety-nine) and their objections resulted in the greatest number of book removals (fifteen of twenty).
16. The NAACP, principals/administrators, and teachers had the highest proportions of their objections result in book removals: one of one, four of six, and one of three respectively.

Parents, on the other hand, had fifteen of their eighty-three objections result in book removals.

17. Most objections were lodged against a book's "language" (thirty-nine), followed by "sex" (seventeen), "race/racism" (ten), "dirtiness/filth" (nine), and "obscenity" (eight).

18. Objections to a book's "content" resulted in the highest proportion of removals (one of three), followed by "language" (twelve of thirty-nine), "race/racism" (three of ten), "dirty/filth" (two of nine), and "sex" (three of seventeen).

19. Most of the books receiving objections were "required reading" (fifty-seven), followed by "recommended reading" (thirty-four) and "free reading" (eight).

20. "Free reading" selections had the highest percentage of removals (fifty per cent), followed by "recommended reading" (twenty-four per cent) and "required reading" (fourteen per cent).

21. Most chairmen (eighty-one of ninety-nine) responded that the objections they received posed problems that were "not at all serious" or "not very serious" for their departments; eighteen chairmen responded that the objections

posed "very serious" or "serious" problems.

22. Eleven of the twenty book removals (fifty-five per cent) were said to have resulted from objections which posed "not at all serious" or "not very serious" problems for the individual departments; nine of the twenty book removals (forty-five per cent) resulted from objections which were said to have posed "very serious" or "serious" problems for the individual departments.

Section 2: Book Selection and Complaint Policies

One purpose of this study is to describe the content of the various book selection and book complaint policies used by the sample schools. This section provides that description.

Written Book Selection Policies

Those twenty-four chairmen whose response to the first question indicated that their schools or departments had a written book selection policy were asked to include a copy of that policy when returning the questionnaire. Twelve chairmen did so. Five more sent their policies after having received a second letter of request. However, two others wrote only a brief explanation, and five ignored both the first and second request. Thus, only seventeen of the twenty-four chairmen did send me their school's written

selection policies.

Of those two chairmen who wrote only a brief explanation, one said that books are discussed in departmental meetings and recommendations for adoption are made to a principal's committee; however, the committee's composition and the procedures and criteria used to adopt books were not explained. The second chairman said that a "request form" is used by the teachers, but gave no description of what the form contained nor how it was to be used.

Of the seventeen written selection policies sent me, eight were primarily policy statements regarding the selection of library books. Whether the objectives, criteria, and procedures in these eight policies can be construed as similar to those also used to select classroom reading material is a moot point, however. Since the chairmen sent these documents in response to question one, I must infer that these policies extend to the practices regarding the selection of all materials for student use, classroom as well as library materials.

Moreover, one of the seventeen policies is unique, too different to allow a review of it to be lumped with the rest. Its purpose is to evaluate textbooks only. Its method is to assign numerical ratings to specific criteria (listed as questions) under the main headings of author, physical aspects, material, organization, methods, vocabulary-readability, and supplementary aids. Total numerical award, 1,000 points. This evaluation is initiated,

presumably, by any staff member who wishes to see an old textbook replaced with a new, but the completed evaluation form must then be reviewed by the principal, department members, building steering committee, and coordinator before going to the board of education for adoption. And, not only must the new textbook be rated, but the old as well.

This form, however, does not seem well-suited for the selection of supplementary materials such as records, newspapers, pamphlets, and the like, nor for works of fiction or poetry, nor for literature anthologies. In essence, few questions fit the evaluation of such materials (i.e., "What experience as a teacher has the author had?"; "Are the pages arranged attractively with legible captions for the major teaching points?"; "Is the size suitable for student handling?"). The form was designed for the evaluation of textbooks and is limited in its usefulness to texts.

There are, however, common elements among the sixteen remaining written selection policies sent by the chairmen. First, nine of the policies contain a brief, introductory statement expressing the general purposes and responsibilities of book selection and the objectives of literature study. Three of these nine policies use the American Association of School Librarians' School Library Bill of Rights for School Library Media Programs[1] for this

[1]A copy of this document is included in Appendix A, page 145.

purpose; two use a statement of the department's own design; and four use a combination of both the School Library Bill of Rights for School Library Media Programs and the department's own statement.

A second common element in the written policies is a statement expressing the board of education's legal responsibility for book selection. Chapter 26, section 882 of State of Michigan, General School Laws states that "the board of each district shall select and approve the text-books to be used by the pupils of the schools of its district on the subjects taught therein."[1] Eleven policies make explicit mention of this legal responsibility; the remaining five mention nothing in this regard.

All sixteen policies, however, include a section that states or implies that this legal responsibility of the board for book and materials selection is delegated to committees or individuals on the professional staff. A third common feature, then, among the sixteen policies is that they identify the personnel delegated the selection authority, their role, and their responsibility.

Such identification, though, ranges rather broadly. There are five vague descriptions of role and responsibility, such as the following:

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[1]Michigan, State of Michigan, General School Laws (1960), chap. 26, sec. 882, p. 161.

> Librarians, teachers, principals, and sometimes parents and students cooperatively shall select . . . materials.

There are six somewhat more inclusive descriptions, for example:

> The . . . Board of Education shall approve all basic textbooks, including paperback books used as basic texts, used in the school system before they are put into use in the classroom. Whenever it is desired to recommend the purchase of a new basic textbook, the initiative in the selection shall be taken by a committee composed of teachers and administrators appointed by the superintendent. Upon the concurrence of the superintendent, the recommendation shall go before the Board of Education with recommendation for adoption.

And there are five statements that seem to me highly explicit, for example:

> The Board of Education delegates the authority and final responsibility for selection of library materials to the professional librarians who select in consultation with the administrators, faculty, and students. These materials include books, periodicals, newspapers, pictures, pamphlets, and clippings. The final responsibility for materials used in the classroom/learning environment is the individual teacher's. This responsibility may be shared with the department, the school, the district only to the extent that the teacher makes use of the established guidelines, policies, and procedures.

The fourth element common in many written policies is a section identifying the basic reference aids used to assist in the selection of books and reading materials, aids such as professionally prepared reading lists, special bibliographies, and book reviewing journals. Eight policies include such a section; eight do not. Those aids mentioned in the eight policies having such a section are: (1) Standard Catalog for High School Libraries; (2) School Libraries; (3) Children's Catalog; (4) Booklist; (5) Library

Journal; (6) A Basic Book Collection for High Schools; (7) A Basic Book Collection for Junior High Schools; (8) Saturday Review; (9) English Journal; (10) Subscription Books Bulletin; (11) book lists issued by the following organizations--National Council of Teachers of English, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Council for the Social Studies, National Science Teachers Association, American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Library Association, H. W. Wilson Company, and R. R. Bowker Company.

The fifth relatively common feature in the written selection policies is a section describing the criteria and procedures used to select books. Three policies contain rather extensive and explicit criteria and procedures; however, four others are somewhat less inclusive and explicit, five are quite vague, and four mention nothing of the criteria and procedures used to select reading materials.

Typically, the policies containing such descriptions of criteria are divided into three sections: (1) General Criteria (in eleven policies), focusing on the broad humane and social values of instructional materials; (2) Specific Criteria (in six policies), focusing on the specific characteristics of the kind, content, and readability of instructional materials; and (3) Criteria Concerning Subjects of Frequent Controversy (in seven policies), focusing on the treatment of or the author's use of and views on sex, race, religion, ideology, politics, and profanity.

Other features included in some of the sixteen written policies are: (1) the names and titles of those responsible for composing the policy--one policy; (2) an indication of the date the policy was adopted--eleven policies; (3) a section, usually as part of the introduction, quoting or endorsing position statements on censorship and book selection issued by professional associations--five policies; (4) a description of procedures used to sell reading material to students--one policy; and (5) sample copies of any special forms used to grant permission to read, to request, or to approve reading materials--one policy.

In sum, when comparing these data with the ALA and the NCTE recommendations for the content of book selection policies (reviewed in Chapter I, pages 34-41), I find that only seven of the sixteen policies contain the recommended content. Table 11, following on page 90, lists these recommendations and shows the frequency with which they appear in the sixteen selection policies, separately identified in the table by the letters A through P. Table 12, following on pages 91-93, lists the more specific similarities and differences in the policies' content.

Summary

Seventeen of the twenty-four chairmen whose response to the first question indicated that their schools or departments had a written selection policy included that policy

TABLE 11

THE FREQUENCY OF APPEARANCE OF ALA AND NCTE RECOMMENDED CONTENT IN THE SAMPLE'S WRITTEN BOOK SELECTION POLICIES

Recommended Content	Appearing in Policies:																Total	
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Yes	No
A statement of philosophy and objectives of materials selection	X[a]	X	X	X			X		X	X			X	X			9	7
A statement that the governing board is legally responsible for the selection of instructional materials	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X					X	X	11	5
A statement detailing the delegation of the selection responsibility to appropriate certified personnel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	16	0
A statement of the criteria to be used in the evaluation of instructional materials	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X		X	12	4
A description of the procedures to be applied in the evaluation and selection of instructional materials	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X		X	12	4

[a]An "X" in the column indicates that the policy does contain that item.

TABLE 12

COMPARISON OF CONTENT IN THE SAMPLE'S WRITTEN BOOK SELECTION POLICIES

Content	Appearing in Policies:															
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Statement of philosophy and objectives:																
School Library Bill of Rights . . . only		X	X										X			
School's statement only										X				X		
School Library Bill of Rights . . . and school's statement	X			X			X		X							
No statement					X	X		X			X	X			X	X
Statement of board's legal responsibility	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X		X	
Statement delegating board's legal responsibility	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Description of selection personnel, role, and responsibility:																
Vague or not very inclusive	X		X								X		X		X	

TABLE 12--Continued

Content	Appearing in Policies:															
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Somewhat more inclusive				X		X		X	X			X		X		
Relatively explicit and inclusive		X			X		X			X						X
Description of aids used in selection	X	X	X	X			X			X			X		X	
Description of criteria and procedures used to select materials:																
No description					X			X				X			X	
Vague or not very inclusive						X					X		X	X		X
Somewhat more inclusive	X	X	X						X							
Relatively explicit and inclusive				X			X			X						
Kind of criteria:																
None					X			X				X			X	
General	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X		X	X		X
Specific	X	X		X			X		X	X						

TABLE 12--Continued

Content	Appearing in Policies:															
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
Concerning subjects of frequent controversy	X	X	X	X			X		X	X						
Miscellaneous:																
Names and titles of those who composed policy							X									
Indication of date policy was adopted	X		X	X		X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X
Description of procedure used to sell reading materials to students						X										
Inclusion of sample copies of special forms for request, approval, etc.						X										
Statements quoting or endorsing ALA or NCTE positions on book selection and censorship		X		X			X			X	X		X			

when returning the questionnaire or sent it later upon receiving a second letter of request. One policy, though, is limited in its usefulness to the evaluation of textbooks; thus, only sixteen written book selection policies were evaluated in this section. And, as Table 11 shows, only seven policies (A, B, C, D, G, I, and J) of the sixteen contain ALA and NCTE recommended content.

Procedures for Selecting Books in Schools Without Written Policies

Question two of the questionnaire asked the chairmen of those departments without written book selection policies to explain briefly the manner in which they or any member of their departments selected books for student use.

The 103 responses to this question mentioned nothing which would explain the objectives, criteria, or procedures each of these departments used to select books. What the respondents did indicate, in almost every instance, was the identity of the person or group or source responsible for the selection of materials. Using this information, then, I was able to group the responses on the basis of similarities in such responsibility. Table 13, following on page 95, reflects the findings of this grouping.

Table 13 shows that twenty-four schools leave the responsibility and final authority of selecting and approving books to the classroom teacher of English. In another sixteen schools the entire English department selects and approves the books. In another twelve schools the department

TABLE 13

PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR SELECTION OF BOOKS IN SCHOOLS WITHOUT WRITTEN BOOK SELECTION POLICIES

Personnel Responsible	Frequency of Response
Individual teacher	24
Entire English department	16
English department chairman	12
Principal	12
Board of education	7
Curriculum council (no description)	6
Reading lists:	
Composed by English department	4
Composed by professional organization (i.e., ALA or NCTE)	1
Composed by board of education	1
English teacher committee	1
English coordinator	1
Curriculum director	1
Committee of teachers and administrators	1
Administrative council (no description)	1
Librarian	1
Nothing mentioned	14
Total	103

chairman must approve all selections. Seven other schools assign the responsibility to different groups or individuals, but in these schools the essential responsibility for selection and approval of books still lies within some part of the English department. In sum, fifty-nine chairmen of the 103 responding to this question (fifty-seven per cent) said that their schools keep, at least in part, the responsibility for selecting books within the English department.

Another twenty-nine chairmen, however, did suggest by their answers that their schools allow the responsibility for approving book selections to drift outside the English department. Twelve schools, for instance, give the responsibility to the building principal; another eight to the board of education; and another nine to some administrator or administrative committee. In other words, slightly over one-quarter (twenty-eight per cent) of the sample schools without written book selection policies seem to insist that book selection is an administrative task.

What this information does not explain, unfortunately, are the objectives, criteria, and procedures used by these personnel to select books. Such information is impossible to deduce from the brief questionnaire responses.

Written Book Complaint Policies

Those forty-nine chairmen whose response to the third question indicated that their schools or departments

had a written book complaint policy were asked to include a copy of that policy when returning the questionnaire. Seventeen respondents did so, and three more sent their policies after having received a second letter of request. Six others ignored the request, and twenty-three mentioned only that their schools use the NCTE's form "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Work."[1] None of these twenty-nine chairmen explained his school's procedure for evaluating or resolving the objection, however. And, even of those twenty who did include their "written policies," eight sent only a printed complaint form, not a description of the procedure used to resolve the objection. As a matter of fact, the only thing close to common in these policies is the use made of the NCTE form "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Work": thirty-nine of the forty-nine schools with a written policy use the form.

There is a difference, though, between a "policy" which simply offers an avenue for lodging an objection and one which offers a carefully worded procedural format for acknowledging, evaluating, and resolving that objection. Only twelve of the forty-nine department chairmen included information which seemed to suggest that their written complaint policies provide for this distinction. The discussion that follows is a description of the various procedures used by these twelve schools.

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[1]A copy of "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Work" is included in Appendix A, page 144.

Acknowledging the objection

Each of the twelve policies requires that any objection, from any source, be submitted in writing. The form most often used by these schools (eight times, is the NCTE's "Citizen's Request for Reconsideration of a Work." Two other schools use a similar form, although somewhat shortened. Another two provide no apparent standard form, but do insist that "criticism shall be submitted in writing."

Five schools require that the completed form be submitted to the building principal, five others require that the form go to the superintendent of schools, one requires that it go to the board of education, and another that it go to the teacher who assigned or recommended the book.

All the schools, though, provide for additional school representatives to consider the written objection. In each case this provision takes the shape of an evaluation committee; however, no two committees are composed exactly alike. For instance, one superintendent who receives the written form passes it along to the board of education for its evaluation and recommendation, while another superintendent is required to appoint an evaluation committee consisting of the school librarians and selected English faculty members who meet with the board of education to review the objection. A third superintendent sends the form on to the English department for its evaluation. A fourth superintendent appoints a committee of selected English

teachers, parents, and school administrators; a fifth appoints a committee of one parent, one teacher, one administrator, and one "at-large member" to review the objection. And the school system which requires the written objection to go first to the board of education makes a provision for the board to pass the complaint on to the superintendent who, in turn, appoints an evaluation committee of unspecified composition. The single school which has all objections go to the teacher immediately involved requires this teacher to submit the complaint to the principal, who then appoints a committee consisting of himself, English teachers, members of the community, and the teacher who assigned the book. In the four schools where the principal receives the written objection, the principals also appoint committees. Three of the committees are composed alike but with varying ratios of librarians, English teachers, and administrators; the fourth committee consists of the entire English department.

Evaluating the objection

After the written objection is received and the appropriate committee appointed, the next step is to consider the objection and evaluate its validity. Once again, no two schools use an identical approach, and some make very little or no provision in their written complaint policies for directions the committees can follow.

Of the twelve written complaint policies, six offer

almost no direction which would aid the evaluation committee. One of these simply says, "the committee will be provided with released time adequate to perform its function." Another explains that the committee should use "considered judgment" which would "best serve the values of quality education." A third states that the committee should consider the objection in the light of serving the "best interests of the pupils, the community, the school, and the curricula." The fourth states, "if the teacher and the objector cannot come to an agreement, an administrator will request teachers and members of the community to serve on a committee for a future meeting between the persons objecting and the teachers defending the book," but does not explain the procedures this committee will follow. The fifth explains that "the review committee [will] hear the [complainant's] case and make recommendations to the superintendent." And the sixth says, "the committee should . . . reevaluate the book . . . and be prepared to explain its subsequent findings.

Six other policies, however, lend somewhat more direction to the committees. These policies explain that the review committees should study the objection and judge whether the book in question does or does not conform to the criteria listed in the written book selection policy. This idea, in principle, is fine; however, in the case of two of these schools the written selection policies are not very detailed and therefore offer little assistance to the

evaluation committees. Only four of the six schools have relatively explicit and inclusive sets of guidelines which explain the objectives, criteria, and procedures for book selection, and therefore do offer assistance.

Resolving the objection

Five of the twelve policies state that the evaluation committee is the unequivocal authority on whether the book is removed or retained. The language of one policy reads, "the decision coming from this [committee] will be final"; that of another reads, "the decision of this committee will be final and the book will be retained or removed according to their decision." The third policy states that "the committee's recommendation shall be forwarded to the Superintendent for reply to the complainant." The fourth explains that "the authority for handling the situation should remain ultimately with the administration which will act on the [committee's] recommendations." And, since the fifth policy provides that the board of education alone will evaluate the objection, the board's decision is final.

The remaining seven committees, however, seem not to have such irrevocable authority. One policy states that "the material in question shall be suspended pending a final decision by the Board of Education." This statement, in effect, censors the book before it is evaluated by the committee, as well as giving the final decision to the board of education, not the evaluation committee. Nor is anything

stated in six other policies which would assuredly prohibit other school officials from altering the decision of the evaluation committee. These six policies have a provision which stipulates that the committees' decisions will be turned over to the boards of education for review. Such a procedure may well result in the boards' agreeing with the committees' recommendations, but then again the boards could just as easily disagree.

When comparing these data with the ALA and NCTE recommendations for the content of book complaint policies reviewed in Chapter I, pages 41-44, I find that only four of the twelve complaint policies contain the recommended content. Table 14 lists these recommendations and shows the frequency with which they appear in the twelve book complaint policies, separately identified by the letters A-L in the table. Table 15, following on pages 104-106, is then included to illustrate some of the more specific similarities and differences in the policies' content.

Summary

Twelve of the forty-nine chairmen whose response to the third question indicated that their schools or departments had a written book complaint policy included that policy when returning the questionnaire or sent it later upon receiving a second letter of request. However, as Table 14 reveals, only four policies (B, D, G, and J) of the twelve contain ALA and NCTE recommended content.

TABLE 14

THE FREQUENCY OF APPEARANCE OF ALA AND NCTE RECOMMENDED CONTENT IN THE SAMPLE'S WRITTEN BOOK COMPLAINT POLICIES

Recommended Content	Appearing in Policies:												Total	
	A[a]	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	Yes	No
A written book selection policy meeting ALA and NCTE recommended content	X	X	X	X			X		X	X			7	5
A statement that the complaint be filed in writing and the complainant properly identified	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	12	0
A statement requiring the establishment of a committee of the teacher group concerned with the selection of the book in question to review the complaint, confer with the complainant, and make appropriate recommendations to administrative authorities		X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	9	3
A statement authorizing the appropriate administrative authorities to act on the evaluation committee's recommendations		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		10	2

[a]The letters in this table correspond to the letters in Tables 11 and 12; thus, book complaint policy A listed here and book selection policy A listed in Tables 11 and 12 are used in the same school, book complaint policy B listed here and book selection policy B listed in Tables 11 and 12 are used in the same school, etc.

TABLE 15

COMPARISON OF CONTENT IN THE SAMPLE'S WRITTEN BOOK COMPLAINT POLICIES

Content	Appearing in Policies:											
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Statement of procedures and criteria used to select materials:												
No statement or very little description					X	X		X			X	X
Contains ALA and NCTE recommended content, but not very detailed	X		X						X			
Contains ALA and NCTE recommended content; relatively explicit and inclusive		X		X			X			X		
Type of complaint form used:												
"Citizen's Request for Reconsider of a Work"	X	X		X		X	X	X	X		X	
Shortened version of "Citizen's Request . . ."					X							X
No standard form			X							X		
Person to whom complaint form is given or sent:												
Principal		X		X			X	X			X	
Superintendent	X					X			X	X		X

TABLE 15--Continued

Content	Appearing in Policies:											
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Board of education			X									
Teacher who assigned the book					X							
Composition of the committee assigned to review and evaluate the objection:												
English department										X	X	
Librarian(s), English teachers, and administrators		X		X			X	X				
Principal, English teachers, citizens, and teacher who assigned the book					X							
English teachers, parents, and administrators						X						
Librarians, English teachers, and board of education	X											
Board of education									X			
Teacher, administrator, parent, at-large member												X
Unspecified			X									

TABLE 15--Continued

Content	Appearing in Policies:											
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
Description of method used to review and evaluate objection:												
None or very little description					X	X		X	X		X	X
Must conform with selection policy criteria and procedures; selection policy contains ALA and NCTE recommended content, but not very detailed	X		X									
Must conform with selection policy criteria and procedures; selection policy contains ALA and NCTE recommended content and is relatively explicit and inclusive		X		X			X			X		
Authority to decide whether book is removed or retained:												
Review committee alone					X		X	X			X	
Review committe, but board of education reviews the committee's decision		X	X	X		X				X		X
Board of education alone									X			
Board of education, which first suspends book in question and then makes a decision	X											

Procedures for Handling Complaints In Schools Without Written Policies

The fourth item on the questionnaire asked the seventy-eight chairmen of those departments without written complaint policies to explain briefly how they or any member of their departments handle a complaint.

Unfortunately, in none of the seventy-eight responses did any chairman indicate the formal procedure his school or department used to receive or acknowledge the complaint, nor did any indicate the explicit method used to evaluate and resolve the objection. In fact, the chairmen provided little information about complaint policies other than an indication of what person or group has the authority to resolve the objection. Table 16, following on page 108, lists this information and the respective frequencies mentioned by the respondents.

What might be inferred from the scant evidence in the responses is that administrators have (or at least share) an inordinate amount of responsibility for evaluating literature and resolving objections; in thirty-five of the fifty-five reported instances the principal or the superintendent shares, at least, the responsibility. In any case, however, the responses simply do not offer explanations sufficient to understand the formal criteria and procedures these schools use to acknowledge, evaluate, and resolve the objections.

TABLE 16

PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS IN SCHOOLS WITHOUT WRITTEN BOOK COMPLAINT POLICIES

Personnel Responsible	Frequency of Response
Objector and principal	11
Objector, teacher, and principal	9
Teacher who required or recommended book	8
Teacher, department chairman, and principal	7
Objector and teacher	4
Entire English department	3
Teacher, objector, department chairman, and principal	2
Department chairman	1
Teacher and department chairman	1
Teacher and curriculum coordinator	1
Teacher and superintendent	1
Objector and department chairman	1
Teacher, objector, principal, and board of education	1
Department chairman and principal	1
Department chairman, principal, and curriculum council	1
Teacher, entire English department, principal, and board of education	1
Teacher, objector, and department chairman	1
Principal and superintendent	1
Nothing mentioned	23
Total	78

Section 3: Effect of Written Policies On the Inhibition or Resolution of Censorship--Quantitative Analysis

Another purpose of this study is to analyze the effects written selection and complaint policies have on the inhibition or resolution of censorship. To accomplish this purpose, I will compare first the incidence of objection and censorship in schools with and without written policies. In this initial comparison no distinction will be made between policies of varying content and quality. The comparisons and conclusions are, therefore, based simply on quantitative data, data taken solely from the chairmen's responses to questions one, three, five, and nine on the questionnaire. These questions asked, respectively, whether the school had (1) a written book selection policy, (2) a written book complaint policy, (3) received an objection to a book used or recommended by an English teacher during the time covered by the survey, and (4) retained or removed the "objectionable" book. A more specific qualitative analysis concerning the content and quality of the written policies and their effects on the inhibition or resolution of censorship will follow in Section 4 of this chapter.

Incidence of objection

As Table 17, following on page 110, reveals, a far larger percentage of schools with a written book selection policy, complaint policy, or both policies received objections than schools with no written policy at all. This

finding, however, is not to be interpreted to mean that because a school has a written policy it receives objections. The data simply do not provide sufficient evidence to substantiate such a causal relationship. The data reveal only that a higher percentage of schools with written policies received objections than schools without.

TABLE 17

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WITH AND WITHOUT WRITTEN POLICIES RECEIVING OBJECTIONS

Type of Policy	Received Objections		Total
	Yes	No	
Written selection only	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	3
Written complaint only	20 (71.4%)	8 (28.6%)	28
Both written policies	16 (76.1%)	5 (23.9%)	21
No written policy	26 (34.7%)	49 (65.3%)	75
Total	64	63	127

Effect on incidence of censorship

Objections, however, no matter how numerous and troublesome, are not in themselves incidents of censorship. The important concern is whether written policies have any effect on decreasing the incidence of censorship (actual book removals). To determine this, I compared the number of schools with written policies which had received an objection and had removed a book to the number of schools

without written policies which had received an objection and had removed a book. Table 18, following, reveals the findings of this comparison.

TABLE 18

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WITH AND WITHOUT WRITTEN POLICIES WHICH HAVE RECEIVED OBJECTIONS AND HAVE REMOVED BOOKS

Type of Policy	Removed "Objectionable" Book		Total
	Yes	No	
Written selection only	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	2
Written complaint only	4 (25%)	16 (75%)	20
Both written policies	3 (18.8%)	13 (81.2%)	16
No written policy	9 (34.6%)	17 (65.4%)	26
Total	16	48	64

The figures in Table 18 indicate that of all the sixty-four schools receiving objections, a slightly higher percentage of those with no written policy at all removed books than did those with just a written complaint policy, but a considerably higher percentage than did those schools with both written policies or just a written selection policy. In total, seven of the thirty-eight schools (about eighteen per cent) with written policies removed books, while nine of the twenty-six schools (about thirty-five per cent) without written policies removed books. Therefore, the questionnaire data seem to suggest that the effect of a

written policy is to decrease the incidence of censorship.

Section 4: Effect of Written Policies On the Inhibition or Resolution of Censorship--Qualitative Analysis

In this section I will compare the incidence of objection and censorship in schools with and without written policies containing ALA and NCTE recommended content.

Incidence of objection

As Table 19 shows, a far larger percentage of schools with a written policy containing ALA and NCTE recommended content receive objections than schools without such policies; however, the questionnaire data are not sufficient to substantiate the conclusion that because a school has such a written policy it receives objections.

TABLE 19

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WITH AND WITHOUT WRITTEN POLICIES MEETING ALA AND NCTE RECOMMENDATIONS RECEIVING OBJECTIONS

Type of Policy Meeting ALA and NCTE Recommendations	Received Objections		Total
	Yes	No	
Written selection only	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	3
Written complaint only	0	0	0
Both written policies	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	4
No written policy	59 (49.2%)	61 (50.8%)	120
Total	64	63	127

Effect on incidence of censorship

To determine the effect of written policies of varying quality and content on the incidence of censorship, I compared the number of schools with written policies containing ALA and NCTE recommended content which had received an objection and had removed a book to the number of schools without such policies which had received an objection and had removed a book. Table 20 reveals the findings of this comparison.

TABLE 20

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WITH AND WITHOUT WRITTEN POLICIES MEETING ALA AND NCTE RECOMMENDATIONS RECEIVING OBJECTIONS AND REMOVING BOOKS

Type of Policy Meeting ALA and NCTE Recommendations	Removed "Objectionable" Book		Total
	Yes	No	
Written selection only	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2
Written complaint only	0	0	0
Both written policies	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)	3
No written policy	14 (23.7%)	45 (76.3%)	59
Total	16	48	64

Generalizing solely from the evidence presented in Table 20, it appears that the effect of a written selection and complaint policy containing ALA and NCTE recommended content is to increase the incidence of censorship. However, upon a closer inspection of the content and quality of those

policies containing recommended content and their effects on the incidence of censorship, the generalization is found wanting.

Two schools with policies containing recommended content removed books. The first has a selection policy only; however, that policy is vague and not very inclusive in two important sections: (1) the description of the role and responsibility of those who are delegated the authority to select books and (2) the description of the criteria and procedures used to select books. Furthermore, the school's book complaint policy is clearly deficient in recommended content. It does not provide for the establishment of a committee of teachers to review the complaint, confer with the complainant, and make recommendations to the appropriate administrative authorities; rather, the policy provides that the board of education will make the "final decision" regarding the retention or removal of a book. Moreover, the policy states that "the material in question shall be suspended pending a final decision by the Board of Education"; consequently, any book receiving an objection is automatically removed. In effect, then, the selection policy--no matter what its content--is rendered ineffectual by the complaint policy in preventing censorship. Table 20 might, therefore, represent this school more accurately as part of the "no written policy" group. If such were the case, the table would show that no books were removed by schools using only a written selection policy containing ALA

and NCTE recommended content.

The second school which removed a book--The Day the Whores Came Out to Play Tennis--even though it had both a selection and complaint policy containing ALA and NCTE recommended content, had that book removed by the superintendent of schools who chose to ignore the policies. (The superintendent refused to send in the book order because he did not like the word "whore" in the book's title.) He did not, in objecting to this book, follow the procedures outlined in the school's book complaint policy, procedures which require anyone objecting to a book's use to follow. He did not submit his complaint in writing, and his complaint was not reviewed by the proper evaluation committee which has the ultimate authority--according to the policy's language--to decide whether a book is to be retained or removed. As a result, the superintendent acted as if no policies existed. This circumstance, though, is not reflected in the data in Table 20; if it were, the table might represent more accurately this school as part of the "no written policy" group and thereby show that no books were removed by schools using both written policies containing ALA and NCTE recommended content.

It is apparent, then, that when the procedures and criteria contained within the policies are followed and enforced by school officials, together a written selection and complaint policy containing ALA and NCTE recommended content have the favorable effect of decreasing the incidence

of censorship.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The findings reported in Chapter III substantiate the three hypotheses of my study, hypotheses derived largely from the literature reviewed in Chapter I.

Hypothesis one

> Most English departments do not have a written policy explaining the procedures and criteria used to select books.

Hypothesis one was found to be true. Twenty-four (about nineteen per cent) of the 127 English department chairmen in the sample reported that their schools or departments have a written selection policy. Seventeen sent copies of their policy. Of those seventeen, only seven contained ALA and NCTE recommended content.

Hypothesis two

> Most English departments do not have a written policy explaining the procedures used to acknowledge and resolve objections to books selected or recommended.

Hypothesis two was found to be true. Forty-nine (about thirty-nine per cent) of the 127 English department chairmen in the sample reported that their schools or departments have a written complaint policy. Twelve sent copies of their policy. Of those twelve, only four contained ALA and NCTE recommended content.

Hypothesis three

> English departments with no written policy are less successful in inhibiting or resolving censorship than English departments with one or both of the written policies.

Hypothesis three was found to be true. Of the thirty-eight schools with one or both written policies which received objections, seven (about eighteen per cent) removed books; of the twenty-six schools without a written policy which received objections, nine (about thirty-five per cent) removed books. Furthermore, the data revealed that censorship is eradicated when school officials follow a written selection and complaint policy containing ALA and NCTE recommended content.

Recommendations

While factors not tested may have influenced my conclusions, the data in hand suggest that the use of a written book selection and complaint policy containing ALA and NCTE recommended content effectively inhibits censorship. I therefore recommend that such policies be designed,

adopted, and used by all public secondary schools in Michigan.

To aid schools in the task of composing such policies, I offer on the following pages 120-145 a "model" selection and complaint policy containing ALA and NCTE recommended content. The "model" is a composite of what seem to me the most inclusive and explicit elements in those seven policies sent by my sample that contain ALA and NCTE recommended content, as well as in the dozens of other policies I encountered elsewhere during the preparation of this study. Where ellipses appear in the "model," the reader is expected to enter the name of whatever person or committee seems most appropriate for his school or department.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY
OF THE . . . PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

This policy statement is the product of the following committee and represents the agreement of all committee members on this subject.

_____, representing Elementary Administration
_____, representing Secondary Administration
_____, representing Board of Education
_____, representing Parents in the Community
_____, representing School District Libraries
_____, representing Elementary Social Studies
_____, representing Secondary Social Studies
_____, representing Elementary Language Arts
_____, representing Secondary English
_____, representing School District Students

The committee feels this statement is a positive policy for the encouragement of a wide and wise use of instructional resources in our schools, as well as for the handling of any incidents of complaint that may arise concerning these resources.

This policy statement has been approved and adopted by the . . . School District Board of Education, _____, ___, ____.
month day year

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INTRODUCTION

The policies here set forth are officially those of the . . . Public School District and followed by all who are concerned with the selection of instructional materials. The purposes of these policies are to:

1. Provide a statement of philosophy and objectives for the guidance of those involved in the procedures for selection;
2. Clarify for the community the philosophy and procedure used in evaluating and selecting instructional materials;
3. Define the roles of those who share in the responsibility for the selection of instructional materials;
4. Set forth criteria for selection and evaluation of instructional materials;
5. Outline the techniques for the application of the criteria;
6. Provide a procedure for the consideration of objections to the use of particular materials in the educational program.

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES OF
MATERIALS SELECTION

The statement below, published by the National Council of Teachers of English, embodies the basic principles on which the . . . Public School District selection policy is founded.

> The right to read, like all rights guaranteed or implied within our constitutional tradition, can be used wisely or foolishly. In many ways, education is an effort to improve the quality of choices open to man. But to deny the freedom of choice in fear that it may be unwisely used is to destroy the freedom itself. For this reason, we respect the right of individuals to be selective in their own reading. But for the same reason, we oppose efforts of individuals or groups to limit the freedom of choice of others or to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.
>
> The right of any individual not just to read but to read whatever he wants to read is basic to a democratic society. This right is based on an assumption that the educated and reading man possesses judgment and understanding and can be trusted with the determination of his own actions. In effect, the reading man is freed from the bonds of discovering all things and all facts and all truths through his own direct experiences, for his reading allows him to meet people, debate philosophies, and experience events far beyond the narrow confines of his own existence.
>
> In selecting books for reading by young people, . . . teachers consider the contribution which each work may make to the education of the reader, its aesthetic value, its honesty, its readability for a particular group of students, and its appeal to adolescents. . . .
> . . . . . .
>
> What a young reader gets from any book depends both on the selection and on the reader himself. A teacher should choose books with an awareness of the student's interests, his reading ability, his mental and emotional maturity, and the values he may derive from the reading. A wide knowledge of many works, common sense, and professional dedication to students and to literature will

guide the teacher in making his selections. The community that entrusts students to the care of [a] . . . teacher should also trust that teacher to exercise professional judgment in selecting or recommending books.[1]

In addition, the . . . Public School District affirms that the school library is primarily an educational service and the selection of its contents is an educational function designed to promote the intellectual, cultural, social, and ethical development of students and to provide materials which extend and deepen the experiences encompassed in the curriculum. The . . . Public School District, moreover, affirms the sharing of the responsibilities of school libraries presented in the School Library Bill of Rights for School Library Media Programs of the American Association of School Librarians:

To provide a comprehensive collection of instructional materials selected in compliance with basic, written selection principles, and to provide maximum accessibility to these materials.

To provide materials that will support the curriculum, taking into consideration the individual's needs, and the varied interests, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds, and maturity levels of the students served.

To provide materials for teachers and students that will encourage growth in knowledge, and that will develop literary, cultural and aesthetic appreciation, and ethnical standards.

To provide materials which reflect the ideas and beliefs of religious, social, political, historical, and ethnic groups and their contributions to the American and world heritage and culture, thereby enabling students to develop an intellectual integrity in forming judgments.

To provide a written statement, approved by the local Boards of Education, of the procedures for meeting the challenge of censorship of materials in school library media centers.

To provide qualified professional personnel to serve teachers and students.[2]

LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR SELECTION

Chapter 26, section 882 of Michigan General School Laws states: "The board of each district shall select and approve the textbooks to be used by the pupils of the schools of its district on the subjects taught therein."

Chapter 27, section 908 of Michigan General School Laws states: "The board of any school district in which a library may be established in accordance with the provisions of this act shall have charge of such library and shall provide the necessary conveniences for the proper care of such library and said board shall be responsible for and shall use all moneys raised or apportioned for its support in accordance with the provisions of law. . . ."

The board of education of the . . . Public School District is therefore legally responsible for the selection and approval of books and other instructional materials in its school libraries and classrooms.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY FOR SELECTION

Since the board of education is a policy-making body, it delegates to the professional personnel of the school district the authority for the selection of instructional materials.

In library materials selection, responsibility for selection and acquisition is delegated to the librarians and teachers, who carry out the practices in accordance with this selection policy.

The selection of required texts for a subject is determined cooperatively by the staff members of the department or school concerned. Optional, suggested, or outside reading called for by individual teachers is left to the careful and considered judgment of the teacher of the class concerned.

In addition, each school may provide a selection of reading materials for sale to students, and each school may provide facilities for special orders by students. Responsibility for the operation of such sales shall be placed within . . . .

REFERENCE AIDS USED IN THE SELECTION
OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids shall be consulted as guides when applicable. These may include, but are not restricted to, such sources as the following:

1. Standard Catalog for High School Libraries
2. A Basic Book Collection for Junior High Schools
3. A Basic Book Collection for High Schools
4. Library Journal
5. English Journal
6. Elementary English
7. Book lists issued by the following organizations--
   National Council of Teachers of English
   National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
   National Council for the Social Studies
   National Science Teachers Association
   American Library Association
   Scholastic Magazines, Inc.

It is to be emphasized that selection, especially of timely or current interest materials, should not be limited to only a few sources. To proceed thus is to invite a delay in acquiring what is often needed as the most up-to-date information or publication.

CRITERIA USED IN THE SELECTION OF MATERIALS

General Criteria

Materials shall be selected (1) to fill the needs of the individual school curriculum, based on the knowledge of administrators and faculty and (2) to fill the needs of the individual student, based on the knowledge of administrators, faculty, parents, and students.

Truth--encompassing factual accuracy, authority, integrity, and balance--shall be a basic requirement in the selection of informational materials. Art--encompassing qualities of imagination, creativeness, style appropriate to the idea, stimulating presentation, vitality, and distinction of format--are important factors in the selection of books of fiction, and of nonfiction as well.

In all cases, choice of materials will be made with the idea of INCLUSION of the best available rather than EXCLUSION for fear of pressure from an individual or group. The . . . Public School District agrees with the National Council of Teachers of English that "the value and impact of any literary work must be examined as a whole and not in part--the impact of the entire work being more important than the words, phrases, or incidents out of which it is made."[3]

Provision will be made, then, for a wide range of materials on all levels of difficulty, with a diversity of appeal, and presentation of varied points of view, with the final decision for selection resting upon whether life is presented in its true proportions, whether circumstances are realistically dealt with, and whether the material is of literary value.

Specific Criteria

Fiction is selected to meet the needs of students varying in reading ability, social background, and taste. Fiction is selected not only to represent literary merit but also to provide books that are competent and successful in all categories of fiction and to provide enjoyable experiences for readers of all ability levels. Although it is impossible to set up a single standard of literary excellence, it is the policy to select fiction which is well written and based on authentic human experience, and to exclude fiction which is incompetent, cheaply sentimental, intentionally sensational or morbid or erotic, and false in its representation of human experience.

Periodicals, newspapers, and pamphlets shall be selected on the basis of presenting factual information, matter of timely or current interest, divergent points of view, value in reference, and accessibility of contents through indexing.

Propaganda pamphlets are expected to be one-sided,

but only those whose publisher's name and statement of purpose are clearly indicated will be selected.

Film and filmstrip selection follows the general policies and objectives outlined for all other instructional materials. Film content, subject matter, and treatment are evaluated in relation to their validity, lasting value or timely importance, imagination, and originality. Criteria for selection of filmstrips include content, quality of the visual material, accuracy, and clarity of accompanying script or recording, importance of the subject in relation to curricular needs, and the unique contribution of this medium in conveying subject matter.

Recordings, musical and nonmusical, in literary and nonliterary fields, are selected by the same general principles applied to the selection of other instructional materials, plus consideration of the value of sound in conveying the subject matter.

Materials obtainable without charge should be free from excessive amounts of advertising, distortion of fact or misleading statements, with the exception of propaganda material as noted earlier. In addition, gifts are accepted on the same general principles applying to the selection of other instructional materials.

Criteria Concerning Subjects of Frequent Controversy

In the selection of materials on religious and quasi-religious subjects, preference is given to the work of

informed, well-established authors whose views may be of concern to the students using the material, no matter how unconventional or contrary to tradition these views may be. Works which tend to foster hatred or intolerance toward racial groups, cults, religious organizations, or religious leaders are subject to very careful scrutiny and are selected only if the work in question has convincing curricular value.

The selection of materials which deal with controversial problems and issues or provide basic factual information on any ideology or philosophy which exerts a strong force--either favorably or unfavorably--in government, current events, politics, education, or any other phase of life should provide as fully as practicably possible for all points of view.

Materials will not be excluded on the basis of the race, nationality, or political or religious views of the author, speaker, or creator if they meet all other requirements.

Materials which contain references to or incidents of sexual behavior, violence, or profanity are subjected to a rigorous test of merit, relevance, and value in meeting the objectives of the course for which they are selected. The maturity and experience of the students by whom the material will be used are taken into consideration. Elements of sexual incident, violence, or profanity do not, however,

automatically disqualify a work. Rather, the decision is made on the basis of whether the material presents life in its true proportion, whether circumstances are realistically dealt with, and whether the material meets the objectives of the course for which it is selected.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING OBJECTIONS TO MATERIALS

Any objection to instructional materials, either from other faculty members or administrators or from parents or members of the community, will be handled in the following way.

I. Any objection regarding instructional materials will be directed to . . . . The . . . and the teacher of the class in which the material is used shall then hear the objection and attempt to answer it satisfactorily through an informal discussion.

A. Any parent who, after discussion with the . . . and teacher, still indicates objection to the use of the material with his child will be told that the parent's guidance function is deeply respected and that the parent is entirely free either (1) to request the teacher to substitute an alternate assignment or (2) to request that the child be placed in another class.

B. Any faculty member, administrator, or member of the community wishing to pursue his objection beyond the informal discussion, or any parent not satisfied with the two alternatives in I-A, will be asked to follow the

formal complaint procedure described below.

II. The . . . shall present the complainant with two pieces of information: (1) a copy of this instructional materials selection policy and (2) a copy of the appropriate complaint form. The complaint forms are included on pages 17, 18, 19, and 20 of this policy statement.

III. The . . . will inform the complainant of the standard procedure for making a formal complaint, which consists of the following:

A. To initiate a formal complaint, the complainant shall be asked to read the materials provided and to complete in writing each part of the appropriate complaint form given him.

B. The completed complaint form is to be submitted to the . . . who will present it to the appropriate evaluation committee for careful consideration. The evaluation committee is appointed by the . . . in consultation with teachers and administrators and is composed of representative members of the teacher group concerned with the selection of the material in question.

C. The evaluation committee will pass judgment as to whether the challenged material

conforms to the principles and objectives of materials selection set down in this policy statement.

D. When the evaluation committee has carefully considered the challenged material in the light of the complainant's objections, the complainant shall be contacted and a meeting arranged by the committee chairman between the evaluation committee and the complainant, at a time which is agreeable to both parties.

E. The evaluation committee reserves the right (1) to limit the number of persons presenting a complaint at this meeting to two individuals, (2) to require that separate complaint forms be completed for each challenged material, and (3) to limit the discussion that takes place in the meeting between the evaluation committee and the complainant to only those objections which have been specifically cited in the complaint form.

F. The format for the meeting shall consist of the following:

1. The chairman of the evaluation committee shall read aloud the

complaint as it was presented, and either he or a member of the committee shall relate the findings that they have made regarding the specific objections cited in the complaint form.

2. The complainant shall have an opportunity to discuss and ask questions about the findings of the committee, clarify his own objection, and present evidence to rebutt the position taken by the committee.

3. When the chairman of the evaluation committee has felt that the issues being dealt with are clearly enough understood, he shall adjourn the meeting.

G. The evaluation committee shall reevaluate its findings in the light of the meeting and render a decision regarding the use of the challenged material in the curriculum.

H. The decision of the evaluation committee will be final, and the material in question will be retained or removed according to their decision.

IV. A report of the findings and decision of the

evaluation committee shall be made to the . . . .

V. The . . . , in turn, shall inform in writing the board of education, the superintendent, and the complainant of the decision.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A BOOK

The spaces provided for answers on this form are not intended to limit comment. Please feel free to write on the back or attach additional sheets. Each portion of this form must be completed before the evaluation committee can reconsider the book.

Author_____

Title _____

Request initiated by _____

Address_____ Telephone _____

City _____ Zip code _____

Complainant represents

_____ himself
_____ name of organization _____
_____ identify other group _____

1. To what in the book do you object? Please be specific; cite pages.

2. What of value is there in this book?

3. What do you feel might be the result of reading this book?

4. Did you read the entire book? _____ What pages or sections?
_____

5. Are you aware of the teacher's purpose in using this book?

6. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this book?

7. What would you prefer the school do about this book?

_____ do not assign or recommend it to my child
_____ withdraw it from all students
_____ send it back to the evaluation committee for reconsideration

8. In its place, what book of equal value would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of a society or a set of values?

_____
(Signature)

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF
OTHER PRINTED MATERIALS

The spaces provided for answers on this form are not intended to limit comment. Please feel free to write on the back or attach additional sheets. Each portion of this form must be completed before the evaluation committee can reconsider the printed material.

Author _____ Type of material _____

Title _____

Request initiated by _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

City _____ Zip code _____

Complainant represents

_____ himself
_____ name of organization _____
_____ identify other group _____

1. To what in the printed material do you object? Please be specific; cite pages.

2. What of value is there in this printed material?

3. What do you feel might be the result of reading this material?

4. Did you read the entire work? ___ What pages or parts?

5. Are you aware of the teacher's purpose in using this work?

6. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this work?

7. What would you prefer the school do about this work?

   _____ do not assign or recommend it to my child
   _____ withdraw it from all students
   _____ send it back to the evaluation committee for reconsideration

8. In its place, what work of equal value would you recommend that would serve as well the purpose for which it was selected?

_____
(Signature)

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF
AN AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCE

The spaces provided for answers on this form are not intended to limit comment. Please feel free to write on the back or attach additional sheets. Each portion of this form must be completed before the evaluation committee can reconsider the audio-visual resource.

Author or producer _____

Type of material _____ Title _____

Request initiated by _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

City _____ Zip code _____

Complainant represents

_____ himself
_____ name of organization _____
_____ identify other group _____

1. To what in the A-V material do you object? Please be specific.

2. What of value is there in this A-V material?

3. What do you feel might be the result of viewing or hearing this A-V material?

4. Did you view or hear the entire A-V material? ___ What parts?

5. Are you aware of the teacher's purpose in using this A-V material?

6. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this work?

7. What would you prefer the school do about this work?

_____ do not assign or recommend it to my child
_____ withdraw it from all students
_____ send it back to the evaluation committee for reconsideration

8. In its place, what work of equal value would you recommend that would serve as well the purpose for which it was selected?

_____
(Signature)

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REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A SPEAKER

The spaces provided for answers on this form are not intended to limit comment. Please feel free to write on the back or attach additional sheets. Each portion of this form must be completed before the evaluation committee can reconsider the presentation.

Speaker _____ Occasion _____

Topic of presentation _____

Request initiated by _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

City _____ Zip code _____

Complainant represents

_____ himself
_____ name of organization _____
_____ identify other group _____

1. To what in the presentation do you object? Please be specific.

2. What of value is there in this presentation?

3. What do you feel might be the result of hearing this presentation?

4. Did you hear the entire presentation? ___ What parts?

5. Are you aware of the purpose in presenting this speaker?

6. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this presentation?

7. What would you prefer the school do about this presentation?

_____ do not assign or recommend it to my child
_____ do not assign or recommend it to any student
_____ have the evaluation committee reconsider it

8. In his place, what speaker of equal value would you recommend that would serve as well the purpose for which he was selected?

_____
(Signature)

FOOTNOTES

[1]Kenneth L. Donelson, ed., The Students' Right to Read (Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1972), pp. 7-9.

[2]American Association of School Librarians, School Library Bill of Rights for School Library Media Programs (Chicago: American Library Association, approved by American Association of School Librarians Board of Directors, June, 1969).

[3]Donelson, The Students' Right to Read, p. 8.

APPENDIX A

CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A WORK

Author _____ Hardcover _____ Paperback _____

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Request initiated by _____

Telephone _____ Address _____

City _____ Zip code _____

Complainant represents

_____ himself
_____ (name of organization) _____
_____ (identify other group) _____

1. To what in the work do you object? Please be specific; cite pages. _____

2. What of value is there in this work? _____

3. What do you feel might be the result of reading this work? _____

4. For what age group would you recommend this work? _____

5. Did you read the entire work? ___ What pages or sections? _____

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this work by critics?

7. Are you aware of the teacher's purpose in using this work? _____

8. What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this work? _____

9. What would you prefer the school do about this work?

_____ Do not assign or recommend it to my child
_____ Withdraw it from all students
_____ Send it back to the English department for reevaluation

10. In its place, what work of equal value would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of a society or a set of values? _____

_____
(Signature of Complainant)

SCHOOL LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS FOR SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA PROGRAMS

The American Association of School Librarians reaffirms its belief in the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association. Media personnel are concerned with generating understanding of American freedoms through the development of informed and responsible citizens. To this end the American Association of School Librarians asserts that the responsibility of the school library media center is:

To provide a comprehensive collection of instructional materials selected in compliance with basic, written selection principles, and to provide maximum accessibility to these materials.

To provide materials that will support the curriculum, taking into consideration the individual's needs, and the varied interests, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds, and maturity levels of the students served.

To provide materials for teachers and students that will encourage growth in knowledge, and that will develop literary, cultural and aesthetic appreciation, and ethnical standards.

To provide materials which reflect the ideas and beliefs of religious, social, political, historical, and ethnic groups and their contribution to the American and world heritage and culture, thereby enabling students to develop an intellectual integrity in forming judgments.

To provide a written statement, approved by the local Boards of Education, of the procedures for meeting the challenge of censorship of materials in school library media centers.

To provide qualified professional personnel to serve teachers and students.

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The Council of the American Library Association reaffirms its belief in the following basic policies which should govern the services of all libraries.

1. As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the authors.

2. Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

3. Censorship should be challenged by libraries in the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

5. The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his age, race, religion, national origins or social or political views.

6. As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members, provided that the meetings be open to the public.

APPENDIX B

February 21, 1970

Dear English Department Chairman:

I need your help.

To gather data for my doctoral dissertation, I am surveying selected Michigan high schools to determine certain facts about book selection practices. I would appreciate greatly your answering the attached, brief questionnaire and returning it to me using the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. All the information you supply will be treated in confidence; no school or person will be identified by name in the dissertation nor in any subsequent publication or report.

As you know, questionnaire surveys are considerably weakened by an insufficient number of replies. Consequently, the questionnaire was constructed so that it could be completed quickly and simply with the hope that this will insure your reply. I thank you in advance for your time and response.

Sincerely,

Rollin Douma

Rollin Douma
Graduate student, U of M

DIRECTIONS: Please reply to all questions applicable to your English department.

1. Does your English department or school have a written policy or procedure explaining how books are selected for student use?

   _____ yes (WOULD YOU KINDLY INCLUDE A COPY WHEN RETURNING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE)

   _____ no

2. If your English department or school has no written book selection policy, please explain briefly how you or any member of your department select books for student use:

3. Does your English department or school have a written policy or procedure for handling complaints about the books selected?

   _____ yes (WOULD YOU KINDLY INCLUDE A COPY WHEN RETURNING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE)

   _____ no

4. If your English department or school has no written book complaint policy, please explain briefly how you or any member of your department handle a complaint:

5. During the past 2½ school years has anyone objected to or asked for the removal of a book an English teacher has used in class or recommended to a student?

   _____ yes

   _____ no

6. If you answered "yes" to the above question, which book(s) received an objection?

   Book 1: _____(title)_____(author)

   Book 2: _____(title)_____(author)

   Book 3: _____(title)_____(author)

7. What was the objection, and who (i.e., parent, teacher, etc.) initiated the objection?

Book 1:_____(objection)_____(objector)

Book 2:_____(objection)_____(objector)

Book 3:_____(objection)_____(objector)

8. How was the book being used when it received the objection?

Book 1	Book 2	Book 3
__required reading	__required	__required
__recommended	__recommended	__recommended
__"free"	__"free"	__"free"

9. What happened to the book after the objection was resolved?

Book 1	Book 2	Book 3
__retained for use	__retained	__retained
__removed from use	__removed	__removed
__other (specify):	__other	__other

10. How serious a problem did the objection pose for your department?

Book 1	Book 2	Book 3
__very serious	__very serious	__very
__serious	__serious	__serious
__not very serious	__not very serious	__not very
__not at all serious	__not at all serious	__not at

11. I encourage you to make comments clarifying or expanding your responses. Include them on the back of this page.

THE MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

January 10, 1973

Dear Colleague,

To complete a study of censorship incidents and book selection practices in Michigan public secondary schools, I need some information about your school. Would you kindly answer the following two questions?

1. Does your English department or school have a written policy explaining how books are selected for student use?

   _____ yes _____ no

2. Does your English department or school have a written policy for handling complaints about the books selected?

   _____ yes _____ no

If your department or school does have either written policy, I would appreciate your sending me a copy. Your written policy (policies) might be useful to other schools now in the process of designing their own. You may use the enclosed, stamped, addressed envelope to send your policy (policies).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rollin Douma

Rollin Douma, Chairman
Professional Practices Committee

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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